

# Calvinist Contact

An independent Christian weekly

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Alison de Groot

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. — World Vision Canada, an international Christian mission agency, is launching a new program called NeighbourLink and its goal is to inject Christians back into their neighbourhoods.

"Love your neighbour. The name NeighbourLink is full of biblical mandate," says Rev. David Adcock, one of three World Vision people working on setting up the program in central Canada. Adcock says Christians need to restore their credibility in the community by getting involved in their neighbourhoods.

NeighbourLink is designed to eliminate overlapping social, church and volunteer services in any given neighbourhood and to create an efficient and effective mechanism for churches to reach out to hurting neighbours.

A similar World Vision program in the United States, known as Love Inc., has expanded over its 12-year existence to include more than 2,000 churches representing 50 different denominations and responding to more than 25,000 people each month, according to a World Vision release.

## Resources meeting needs

World Vision responded to a need in Canada for a similar program when it set up a pilot NeighbourLink program in Maple Ridge, British Columbia. John Howat, NeighbourLink's western regional co-ordinator calls the program "an attempt to meet people at their point of need."

The plan, originally conceived by Dr. Virgil Gulker, is simple: a central office to connect available resources with community needs. World Vision's NeighbourLink does this using four steps, according to their release. First requests for help, people who need food, clothing, shelter, budget planning, literacy skills, family assistance, etc., are referred to a NeighbourLink "community clearing house" by any church, agency or individual in the community.

The next step is for trained personnel at NeighbourLink to work co-operatively with service agencies by helping to analyse requests for assistance. If the needs are real and the problem identifiable, the clearing house trains church contact people to identify the volunteer and material resources potentially available in their church. Volunteers from churches are then connected with people in need in their neighbourhoods. This allows those receiving assistance to become directly involved in the church extending care to them.

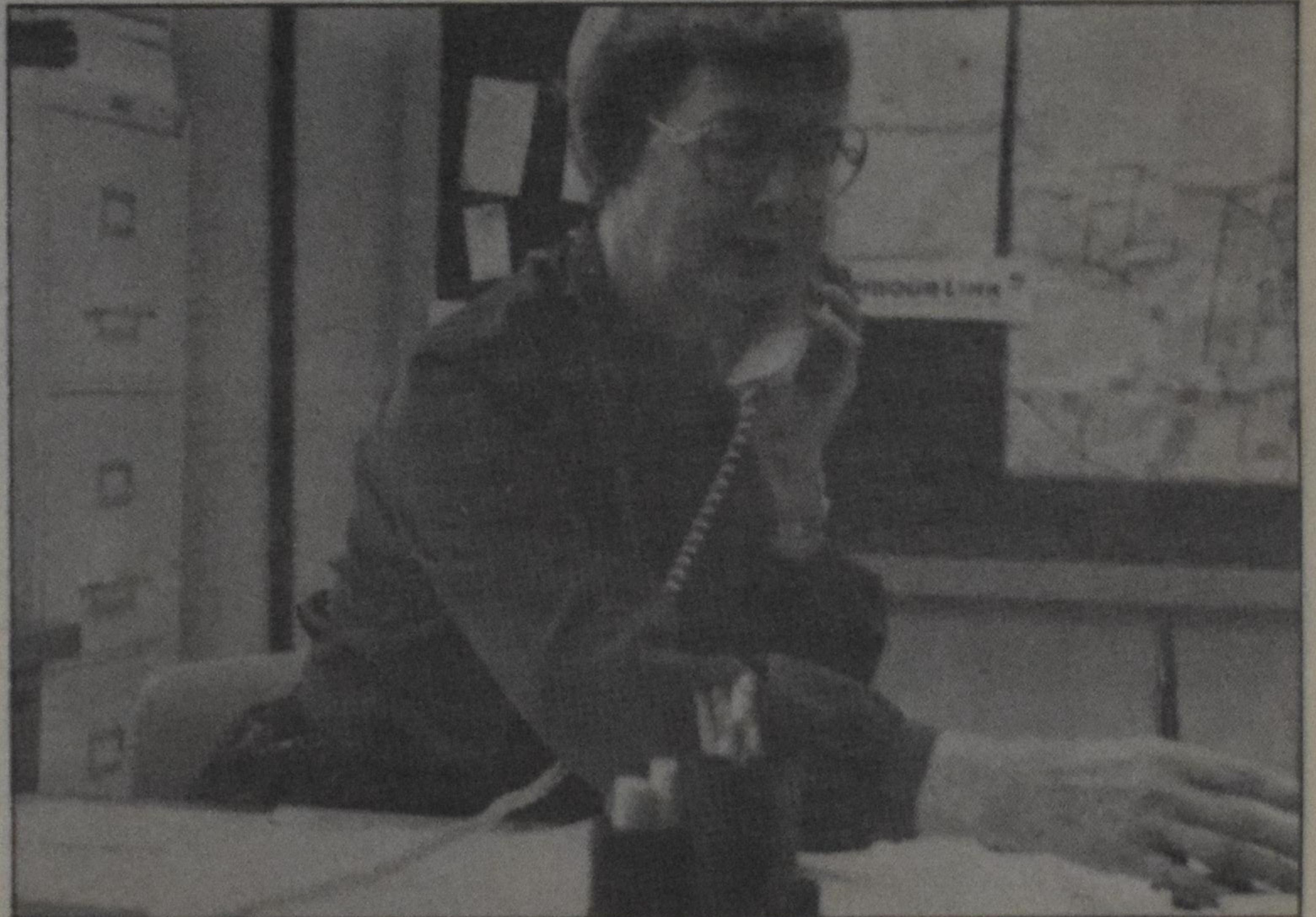
## Developing the plan

NeighbourLink would then, in a final step, contact the church volunteers, those receiving assistance and whoever made the original referral to make certain that the goal is being achieved.

The main focus in central Canada will likely be urban to start with, says Adcock, with locations like Toronto and Hamilton as pilots.

Adcock says that initially the program will deal with functional

## World Vision to launch ministry co-ordinating community outreach programs of neighbourhood churches



A central "community clearinghouse" co-ordinates volunteers and resources with needy members of the neighbourhood. This is the idea behind World Vision's NeighbourLink program for community churches.

needs, such as food, clothing and shelter, but as each community clearing house expands and becomes more organized, it may deal with underlying relational needs such as family counselling or financial planning.

Finally, says Adcock, each community will be able to identify specific community needs, such as language training if the community has an immigrant sector.

See NEIGHBOURLINK -- p. 2.

## Ontario's House Speaker fails to remove Christian prayers from legislature

Marian Van Til

TORONTO — If some of Ontario's legislators thought they wouldn't have to deal with the Lord's Prayer any longer when its recitation was eliminated from the province's public schools, they were wrong. They've recently come face to face with it in their own House. But when it came down to it, most MPPs were not yet ready to give up that prayer or other Christian prayers in their assembly.

On Nov. 27, 1990, Speaker of the House David Warner addressed a letter to Progressive Conservative House leader Ernie Eves in which he expressed

leaders," he says.

The title of the fund comes from the Old Testament concept of the Jubilee year, where the ancient Hebrews were required every 49 years to set slaves free, cancel all debts and return land to its original owners. The 500th anniversary of the voyage of Columbus is "ten Jubilees," notes Bartel, suggesting that such a fund would "have the possibility of allowing Canadian Mennonites and Brethren in Christ church members to make a symbolic statement of concern about past injustices and future hope."

MCC Canada made a similar gesture in 1984 when a Canadian/Japanese scholarship was created as a tangible expression of regret for injustices that Japanese-Canadians suffered at the hands of Mennonites during the Second World War.

a "wish to consult with the members through the three House leaders about the appropriateness of prayers."

Warner told Eves that because "in a multi-religious society it is no longer seen as appropriate to have daily prayers in the Ontario public school system and in public institutions," it might also be the time "to readdress... the reading of prayers in the Ontario legislature."

Speaker Warner requested Eves to discuss the matter during the regular PC party caucus meeting on December 4 and to ask members to respond at the following meeting.

## 'Prayer' or 'reflection'?

Warner enclosed a "generic" prayer with his letter to Eves, saying that, as Speaker, he intended to make use of it beginning December 17 "if there is no strong sentiment expressed" [by other See ONTARIO'S -- p. 2.

## Mennonite Central Committee to explore 'Jubilee Fund' for Natives

WINNIPEG, Man. — Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada has been given a green light to explore the possibility of creating a "Jubilee Fund" which could symbolically address concerns about treaty land entitlements for Native people in Canada.

The idea of such a fund first surfaced in a report about treaty land entitlements prepared for MCC Canada by Frieda Esau Klippenstein. It was picked up by the Conference of Mennonites in Canada (CMC) at its July 7-11, 1990, convention in Edmonton, when delegates from across the country passed a motion to explore the creation of a fund, together with MCC Canada.

In passing the motion, CMC

delegates suggested that the fund could be used to help Native people purchase land due them through treaty land entitlements. The focus of the fund could be areas of Canada where Mennonites have directly benefited from use of Native lands.

Treaty land entitlements are parcels of land promised to Native people by the Canadian government but never delivered. Some of these land debts are now over 100 years old.

MCC Canada Native Concerns staff were given permission to work with the CMC in exploring the creation of such a fund at the December 7-8 MCC Canada executive committee meeting in Winnipeg. MCC Canada interim Native Concerns director Bob Bartel stresses, however, that a recommendation to set up the fund will only occur after Native leaders have been consulted.

He also emphasizes that use of the money to purchase land "may not be the most appropriate use of the funds. We will know how best to use the fund, if we create it, after talking with Native

## Thinkbit:

It has been said that when human beings stop believing in God they believe in nothing. The truth is much worse; they believe in anything.

Malcolm Muggeridge (1903-1990)

## In this issue:

Mother Earth Spirituality, the latest "spiritual trend." What's it all about? See ..... pp. 10-11  
Education: Robert Kooy discusses the place of drama in Christian high schools and an Edmonton Christian school teaches kindergarten students through play ..... p. 12  
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David T. Koyzis

## Across the Globe

### Where will the new global fault lines lie?

As recently as last summer we were basking in the afterglow of the Cold War's end and were planning what to do with the money we would save by reducing military expenditures. Few people foresaw Iraqi president Saddam Hussein's decision to invade and annex neighbouring Kuwait, but it perhaps should not have surprised us that Hussein would choose this time to undertake such an obvious act of aggression. Indeed, with the collapse of superpower rivalry the world may have entered a period in some ways more dangerous than the one we have just left behind.

In the last year the global balance of power has shifted dramatically, and this has had both good and bad side-effects. On the one hand, the Cold War is over and the Soviet Union is making much more pacific noises than we have been used to hearing from it. Eastern Europe is now free to find its own way and to make its own mistakes as it recovers its long-suspended political pluralism. Many regional conflicts, such as the 15-year-old Angolan civil war, have been winding down because the United States and the Soviet Union are no longer fuelling them.

But the end of the Cold War also has a dark side which we may not have anticipated. For 40 years the world was poised on a nuclear hair trigger which, as many observers have pointed out, effectively prevented large-scale conventional war. With the continuing possibility of overt superpower conflict, both the United States and the Soviet Union effectively restrained their client states from obvious acts of aggression that might have drawn the other superpower into a more dangerous nuclear confrontation.

#### Festering conflicts

For better or worse, this uneasy peace no longer operates. The Soviet Union is no longer in a position to exercise any significant influence over its one-time clients, including Saddam Hussein, whom it helped to create.

Moreover, if the Soviet Union does indeed

break up, we will doubtless be witnessing the largely Muslim republics of Soviet central Asia becoming engulfed in the politics and conflicts of the adjacent Middle East. In effect, this would expand in a northerly direction a region already known for its volatility. Festering conflicts of the sort which have long plagued Afghanistan, the Persian Gulf and Israel-Palestine could spread into this newly "freed" territory as, say, Uzbekistan and Tadzhikistan take up arms over disputed borders or ethnic minorities. Without the Soviet army to police these areas, warfare would almost certainly be protracted and bloody.

This may not be enough to make us nostalgic for the Cold War and the old Soviet empire, but we are nevertheless beginning to see the potential dangers that can occur in the wake of a power vacuum in the international arena. Quite suddenly Moscow has unilaterally put aside its former pretensions to superpower status and has decided to become a good international "citizen." Of course, it has not had much choice in the matter. Its new policy has coincided with the virtual collapse of its economy and of the attendant communist ideology that has ruled the country for 70 years. Until and unless it can get back on its political and economic feet, a significant international role for the Soviet Union (or a future Republic of Russia) is out of the question.

So what next? Where will the new global fault lines lie? Predictions are hazardous nowadays. It is tempting (albeit too simplistic) to see in the current Gulf crisis a revival of the ancient hostility between a now secularized European Christendom and a resurgent Islam. Whatever form the post-Cold War world will take, we may see more acts of aggression similar to Saddam Hussein's annexation of Kuwait.

*David T. Koyzis is assistant professor of political science at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.*

## Canadian Christmas services broadcast in the Netherlands



Photo: Bert Witvoet  
A women's quartet "imported" from the Netherlands entertains elderly Dutch Canadian immigrants.

#### Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO — Two recent celebrative Christmas events in Ontario were broadcast in the Netherlands on December 24 and 26 by the Evangelical Broadcasting Station (*Evangelische Omroep*), reports local co-ordinator Jack Brouwer.

One Christmas service was held in the Dutch language at Holland Christian Homes in Brampton, Ont. Elderly Dutch immigrants packed the facility's chapel to sing traditional Christmas songs. The Ambassador Male Chorus of Hamilton sang, and Rev. Jacob Kuntz, C.C. contributor and pastor of First Christian Reformed Church, Kitchener, Ont., gave a Christmas meditation.

The next day, the Sunday evening worship service at Grace Christian Reformed Church in Scarborough, Ont., was recorded, a service entirely in English. Again there was much singing of carols, and this time special music was provided by the Soli Deo Gloria Choir.

Additional music at both services was provided by small Dutch ensembles flown to Toronto for the broadcasts — a women's quartet and an instrumental group.

The excitement and large attendance at both services demonstrated that strong ties remain between Dutch immigrants of the 1950s and their kin "back home."

## NeighbourLink program to match church resources with community needs

... continued from page 1.

Adcock stresses that World Vision's involvement is to provide training, organization, consistency and credibility to the plan, but that each clearing house or community would be run by a local planning committee and local board of representatives from each church or group involved.

"This is World Vision's response to the question, 'You're doing great in the Third World, but what are you doing in Canada?' This is a response to a real need in Canada," says Adcock, who feels Christians want to get out in the community and help but don't know how.

Don Posterski, World Vision's newly-appointed vice president for national

programs, described NeighbourLink as "a healthy, wholesome way for Christians to leave the ghettos that they've moved into and to move back into the world, doing good in the name of Christ," in a recent interview with Vancouver's *Christian Info News*.

Adcock says he's excited about his new position as eastern regional co-ordinator of the NeighbourLink program although he's not quite ready to put the program into full effect. With another month of training and organizing, Adcock says they'll be ready to start responding to church and community interest and he'll be ready to respond to his "call from the Lord" in his new role.

the legislature."

Jackson asserted that "it is the values of the family, of private property, of hard work and belief in God that have made Ontario what it is. To cut away those values will be to cripple Ontario's economy, because the spirit of this province's people has been crippled."

Apparently, most of his colleagues, including some New Democrats, agreed and Warner's proposal died relatively quietly for the second time.

## Ontario's parliament still praying in public

... continued from page 1.

MPPs]. Warner's "prayer" reads: "As we come together today, let each member of this Parliament reflect upon the great responsibilities given to us in making decisions in the best interests of the people of the province."

"May our deliberations in this chamber be characterized by temperance, understanding and reason so that our decisions will reflect a true spirit of justice and equity to all people."

"I would now invite members to pause and reflect for a moment on their duties and the interests of the province."

Warner proposed "prayer," though seemingly addressed to

fellow MPPs rather than to God or any deity, clearly reflects the contents of one of the Christian prayers, along with the Lord's Prayer, which is currently in use in Ontario's parliament. The prayer from which Warner borrowed reads: "O God, our heavenly Father, we come before you this day, asking your blessing upon Her Gracious Majesty Queen Elizabeth and upon her representative in this province."

"Give to each member of this legislature a strong and abiding sense of the great responsibilities laid upon us. Guide us here in our deliberations. Give us a deep and thorough understanding of the needs of the people we serve. Help us to use power

wisely and well. Inspire us to decisions which establish and maintain a land of prosperity and righteousness where freedom prevails and where justice rules. Amen."

Warner's suggestion was a clear departure from current practice in Ontario's parliament and he clearly misread the attitudes among his fellow legislators regarding this potentially contentious issue. Whether the majority of MPPs objected to Warner's proposal out of their own convictions or for political expediency is difficult to determine.

Some objections were clearly stated out of principle, but the protests, even so, were generally set out in terms of political opponents criticizing



# News

Welcomed like a pig roast at a bar mitzvah, the GST made its entrance into our life. A mighty chorus of complaints was heard from sea to sea, all to no avail. Albertans, as unfamiliar with the whole concept of sales tax as the Pope with connubial bliss, greeted the GST like a debtor greets the bailiff. In La Belle Province and other eastern regions, people got a double piledriver-whammy because the GST was applied to price plus provincial sales tax. Two predictions can be made with a great deal of certainty: the uproar will die down and the GST rate will rise after the next election. One question remains: does a visiting minister charge GST for his sermon? It is a service, isn't it?

A Gallup poll held in December showed the following percentages of popularity of political parties in Quebec: Block Quebecois, 32%; Liberals, 27%; N.D.P., 20%; Tories, 19%. The N.D.P. leads the polls nationally with 36% voter popularity. Monsieur's popularity is about to fall below measurable amounts.

The West was hit by winter. Temperatures fell below human tolerance and snow clogged the roads. Domino's Pizza, a major U.S. fast-food chain, discontinued its tradition of promising delivery within a half-hour. The cold wave spread to the prairies to make life miserable for picket-walking nurses in Manitoba.

It is rumoured that Gordon Gibson, a disillusioned former Trudeau admirer and bestman at the Pierre-Margaret wedding, as well as former friend of English Princess Margaret, is considering running for the Reform Party in the upscale hoity-toity Quadra riding in Vancouver, held currently by none other than John Turner. The Reform Party is courting Gibson with a promise of \$75,000 in campaign funds. Somehow it seems that the Reform Party is as strangely out of place in Quadra as the American hamburger joints that have inundated Paris.

I came across a publication called *Nature*. It wants us to know that "Dynamitin is a recently discovered mechanochemical ATPase that mediates sliding between microtubules." I knew that none of our readers wanted to miss that piece of information.

New Year's Day brought salary increases on the Hill even though the legislators will be absent until mid-February. Senators' 1991 salary will be \$74,500 including a \$10,000 tax-free expense allowance as well as a \$153 *per diem* bonus for showing up. The people who warm the seats in the House of Commons will receive \$64,000 per year, a \$21,300 tax-free expense account, a \$6,000 housing allowance and no GST on their office equipment. All in all, nothing outrageous really. I know people in garbage collection who make a lot more than that. On the other hand I also know professors who make a lot less than that.

The Queen bestowed knighthoods and peerages. I was passed over again. To make up for that royal neglect, the Dutch Minister of Defence promised to send me a coloured ribbon for being at the receiving end of a machine gun some 40 years ago.

Toronto to the good ... where bankrobbers established a new record. An unnamed detective knew the reason behind this crime wave: "I think they were trying to beat the GST," he said.

And in the oops column belongs this item from New Brunswick, where workers tried to protect one of Canada's last historic covered bridges from the danger of falling rocks. It was decided to blast the rocks out of the way. Something went wrong, for instead of the rocks, the bridge blew up into a couple of thousand pieces. Oops! Just wasn't their day, I guess.

There are feverish diplomatic efforts going on in an attempt to prevent bloodshed in the Persian Gulf conflict. The European community is getting into the act, as well as Arab countries. The danger of war remains, however, very real.

Saddam Hussein wants to draw the problem of between 600,000 and 800,000 displaced Palestinians into the negotiations. The Iraqis have displaced at least an equal amount of people out of Kuwait. News of Iraq cruelty in Kuwait was released by Amnesty International. Torture in Kuwait is now widespread. International reporters and the Red Cross are not allowed to operate in

Kuwait. Attempts to extinguish Kuwait as an independent nation have been vicious and sometimes ludicrous. Residents have had to change street names, identity documents and car number plates. The time difference between Kuwait and Iraq has been abolished. For reasons unknown, the Iraqi army bans Kuwaitis from growing a beard. Some offenders are punished by having their beards plucked out with pliers.

Haiti has a new president. It is priest-president Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide. The Vatican is likely to suspend him for going against the Pope's wishes. The Pope forbids political roles for priests. The new president will not be allowed to exercise his priestly functions. Canon law prescribes that a man in his position may validly confer the sacraments, but may not legally do so. How is that again?

British MPs voted against restoring the death penalty by the largest majority ever. The death penalty remains in the books though for piracy and treason.

At recently organized anti-American demonstrations in Iran, the attendance was more disappointing than the turnout at a pauper's funeral. President Hashemi Rafsanjani has turned the anti-American thermostat down a few degrees. He is aiming for a more pragmatic vision of Islam, including rebuilding of the economy and breaking out of Iran's diplomatic isolation.

Gorbachev's *perestroika* is in a comatose state. Decisions taken by central authorities are blocked by the regions and republics. Proud Mother Russia is humiliated into having to make desperate pleas for foreign charity, and in its Armenian republic, famine is as real a threat as it is in Sudan and Ethiopia. How art thou fallen .... *The Economist* speculates that the next great world conflict might be between Islam and Christianity.

A month ago a Washington think-tank rated the "liveability" of the world's largest 100 cities. Seattle was the American city that did best. The same day I read in the *Montreal Gazette* that a Mr. Garry Longfelder, president of the Forgotten Children's Fund, showed up in a Santa suit in a Seattle apartment building to

deliver toys to needy families. Inadvertently he had parked his car in the building manager's space. When Mr. Longfelder returned he found his wheels locked and it cost him \$150 to get his car back. The think-tank did not know about that, I bet. The *Montreal Gazette* did

though. Sour grapes, maybe?

Concluding remark: a hug says more than all the theology in the world.

Carl D. Tuyl is the Christian Reformed Church's chaplaincy co-ordinator in Canada.

## Pressreview

Carl D. Tuyl



## Redeemer College lowers cost to students

C.C. staff

ANCASTER, Ont. — In a dramatic move, Redeemer College has dropped the fees charged to students for a year's tuition, room and board to \$5,990 from this year's fees of \$10,430, President Henry De Bolster has announced.

This was made possible by the formation of a trust fund which will pay the college the difference between the full costs and what the students pay. Tuition itself will be \$4,450 for the year, and room and board in college housing will be \$1,540. This means that students will be able to attend Redeemer for about the same cost they would pay for a year's tuition, room and board at a public university like McMaster.

At the start of the school year students will pay the full amount for the year to the trust fund. This money can come from various sources available to students, including government grants and loans, summer employment and other scholarships. The low rate is conditional upon the student's staying at Redeemer for the entire school year — a student who chooses to leave before the year is finished will need to pay at the higher rate.

Since tax money which keeps tuition low at public universities is not available to Redeemer, friends of the

college have set up this trust fund whose earnings will have a similar result for Redeemer students, says William Smouter, Redeemer's vice-president for advancement.



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## Attention: C.C. Subscribers (paying 1990 prices)

The GST is now upon us! New subscription rates went into effect Jan. 1, 1991, (see the announcement printed elsewhere in this issue). We do, however, continue to receive cheques for renewals or new subscriptions using the old (1990) prices. We must pay GST on all such amounts.

Rather than bill the senders for the difference (between the 1990 and 1991 price), we herewith advise them that their subscriptions will have an **earlier expiry date** than would otherwise be the case. In other words, we will shorten your subscription period to cover the price difference if you send the old amount.

Stan de Jong  
Manager



# Commentary

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## Church conflict seen as 'paradigm shift'

Many Canadian churches are battlegrounds today between camps with opposing views. This is not surprising: we should expect massive changes in society to affect churches whose members are in touch with the world around them.

This is not the first time in history, of course, that a set of new ideas has arisen which conflicts with existing ones. Historians and social scientists have studied this phenomenon and their insights may help us understand it and remove some mystery and fear.

In the 16th century Copernicus and Galileo said that people should think of the earth as a planet revolving around the sun rather than as the fixed centre of the universe. This led to a whole new way of thinking, which we now call the "scientific revolution."

Thomas Kuhn has called this kind of change a "paradigm shift," the change of one coherent set of ideas for another. A paradigm shift is a different way of looking at the same thing, as if we put on glasses of a different colour from the colour we had been using.

In the church there are sharp differences, not simply on a single issue or two, but on clusters of issues. You could say that there are at least two strongly-held paradigms, different viewpoints, fighting for prominence. At the risk of oversimplifying, I'll identify them as I understand them. One I'll call the *classic* and the other the *contemporary* paradigm. You can see whether the main lines fit your own observations.

The classic view finds strength in historic formulations of theology and ways of dealing with issues. It has a high view of the Bible and Scripture's authority as a rule for our lives. It tends to a literal interpretation of the Bible, with theology seen as timeless and clearly rational. The preacher is a strong authority figure who proclaims "Thus saith the Lord" and leads the worship service himself. Women are helpers in church under the headship of men. Moral problems find clear solutions in the Bible.

In the contemporary paradigm, too, the Bible is a rich, valued guide which must be faithfully followed. Where there is figurative language in the Bible, it must be understood with attention to the meaning and intent behind the words.

Systematic theology is not as important as the application of biblical teaching to the problems around us in today's secular world. Authority is to be shared in the church, and the pastor as leader shares leadership in worship services with members of the congregation. Women are equal partners with men and may share ordination to church offices. Moral judgment is less important than loving concern, in the spirit of Jesus, for people who are hurting. The future provides many challenges for presenting the Gospel, but we should not expect simple answers to the complex issues of today's world.

### Neither view is wholly right

Neither outlook is wholly wrong nor wholly right. Each meets some needs better than others. It is in the nature of competing paradigms, says Kuhn, that people holding one of them tend to talk past people holding a different paradigm because the language and perceptions of each don't match.

To identify and put a name on a problem does not by itself solve it. But if we go to a doctor feeling sick and the doctor is able to put a name on our ailment, we already feel better because our sickness is not unknown. We are comforted that others have lived with our disease, and maybe there are ways of treating it.

There are never simple cures for the anxiety of paradigm shifts. As with some health problems, time is a factor in healing. The tension is something we will need to live with for a while. Within the church we ask ourselves whether we want to hold on to people who confess Christ but live out their Christian faith in different ways than we do. In large measure our answer depends on whether we see the greater threats to the faith *within* the church or *outside* it.

Here, too, history has changed — a couple of hundred years ago all of Western Europe was Christian, so church splits did not take place in the midst of a godless society. I urge that church members on all sides of whatever church not fail to give great importance to bringing the Gospel to people in our pagan culture and to people whose hurts can be healed by the loving embrace of Christ.

RVV

## Investment in education

"Education is probably *the* most important investment we will ever make in our lifetime," writes the chairperson of our local public school board of education in a letter sent to every home within the jurisdiction of the board.

Education is indeed one of the most important contributors to our well-being. But I fret about this quoted statement.

"Investment" is the language of business which expects a financial payoff. Investment in the right kind of education, it is suggested, will help us earn more money in the years ahead.

The Bible tells us that "where your treasure is

there will your heart be also." That adds a new dimension. That statement is not just two-dimensional. It leads us to think ahead, to plan ahead for what will last beyond our years on earth.

We should indeed invest in education that will develop abilities to the fullest. But that education should draw our hearts to the living God, and to the eternity where moth and rust do not devour, where investment leads to treasures most beautiful and enduring.

RVV



## Longer Letter (More letters on page 14...)



Marian den Boer

### Like the lilies



## A greasy situation

I don't remember exactly when the toilet stopped flushing properly, but it happened after several months of my recklessly throwing cooking grease and left-over gravy into the thing.

I had an inkling this was not an excellent way to dispose of grease, yet to my way of thinking, it was better than pouring the stuff down the sink and not as messy as throwing it in the garbage. Suffice it to say, when the toilet drain began acting sluggish I felt responsible and poured further grease under a bush in the backyard.

In the meantime, three minutes with a toilet plunger would unclog the toilet, but only temporarily. Bottles of Liquid Plumber, solutions of lye, and canisters of Drano (not to be used in toilet bowls) followed one another to the sewer. Nothing helped for long. I sent my husband Marty to the Rent-All for an auger. He augered for 20 minutes, with only a scratched toilet bowl to show for his efforts.

The toilet was getting to be an embarrassment. As a family we instinctively began using the upstairs "John" only, but we never quite remembered to warn unwary guests about our faulty facilities until it was too late.

Then one Monday morning after a Sunday guest had suffered the indignity of using our washroom, I took dramatic action: I called a plumber. This was a last resort and something I did not do easily. Plumbers have a way of pointing a person to her own stupidity and they generally charge a lot of money to do this.

"Has a kid dropped a toy in here?" he questioned.

"I was throwing grease down there for a while." I winced as I said it, but thought I might as well confess, as plumbers are able to figure these things out anyway.

"Tut, tut, I won't slap your hand," he comforted. He plunged; he augered; he turned the water off; he removed the whole toilet; then he reached down into the hole in the floor and pulled out the culprit.

"There was something in the grease!" he announced triumphantly as he held up every dog's treasure, a thick 5-inch soup bone.

I blushed and stammered and felt very foolish.

"These things happen," he said, kindly brushing aside my guilty feelings. Then he put everything back except the bone and scrawled out a bill for \$65.

I thanked him as he left. I was relieved to have the problem solved.

Now, how was I going to face the family? I buried the bone in the garbage — a show-and-tell was not what I wanted.

That evening, I announced to Mary and the kids, "The toilet is fixed." Of course they wanted to know details, which I reluctantly told them, playing down the size of the bone and the size of the bill. Being family, they understood. It's been two months now, and they hardly even mention it anymore!

Marian den Boer is a free-lance writer who lives in Hamilton, Ont.

## Like asking a communist to critique Marx?

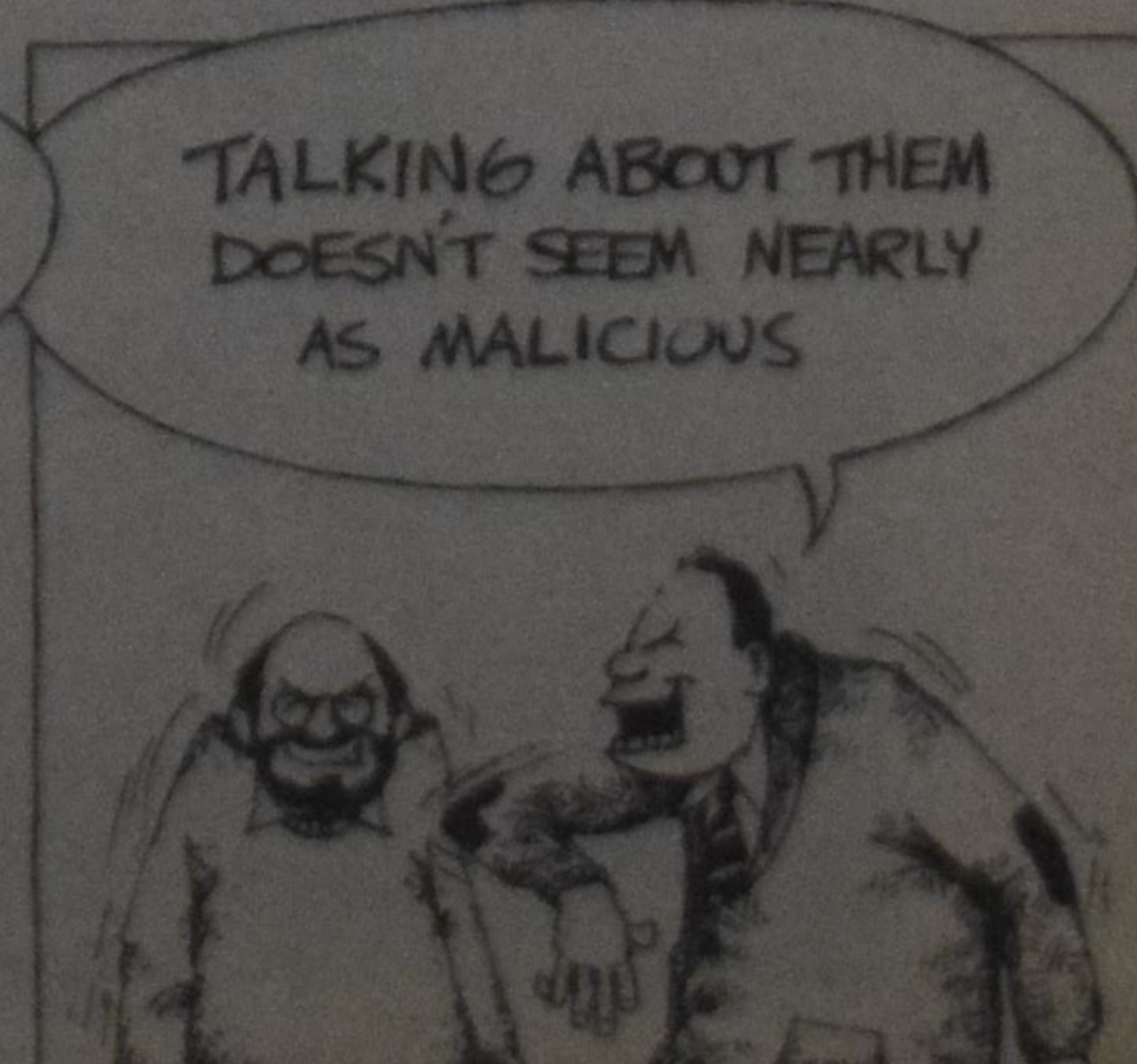
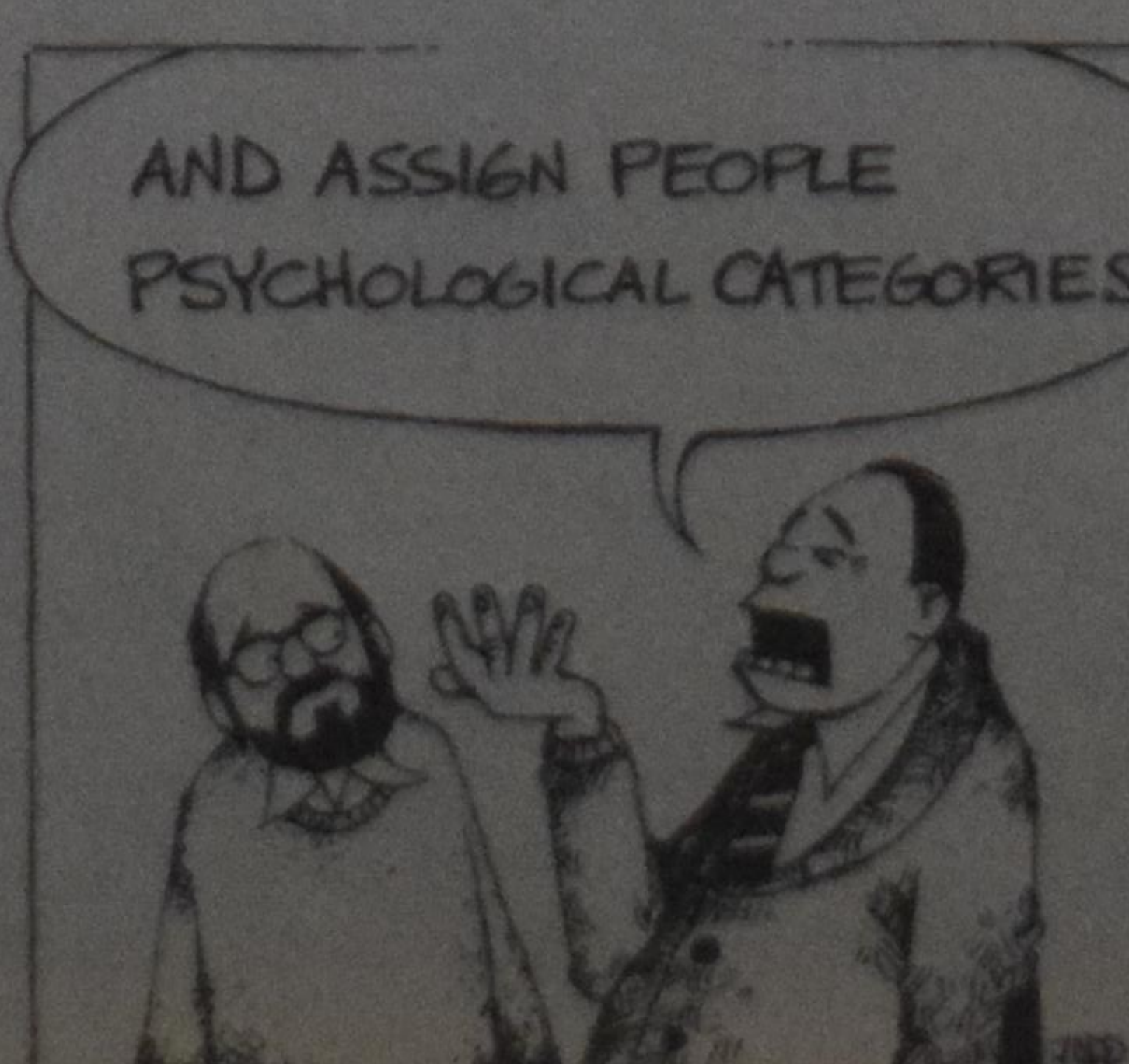
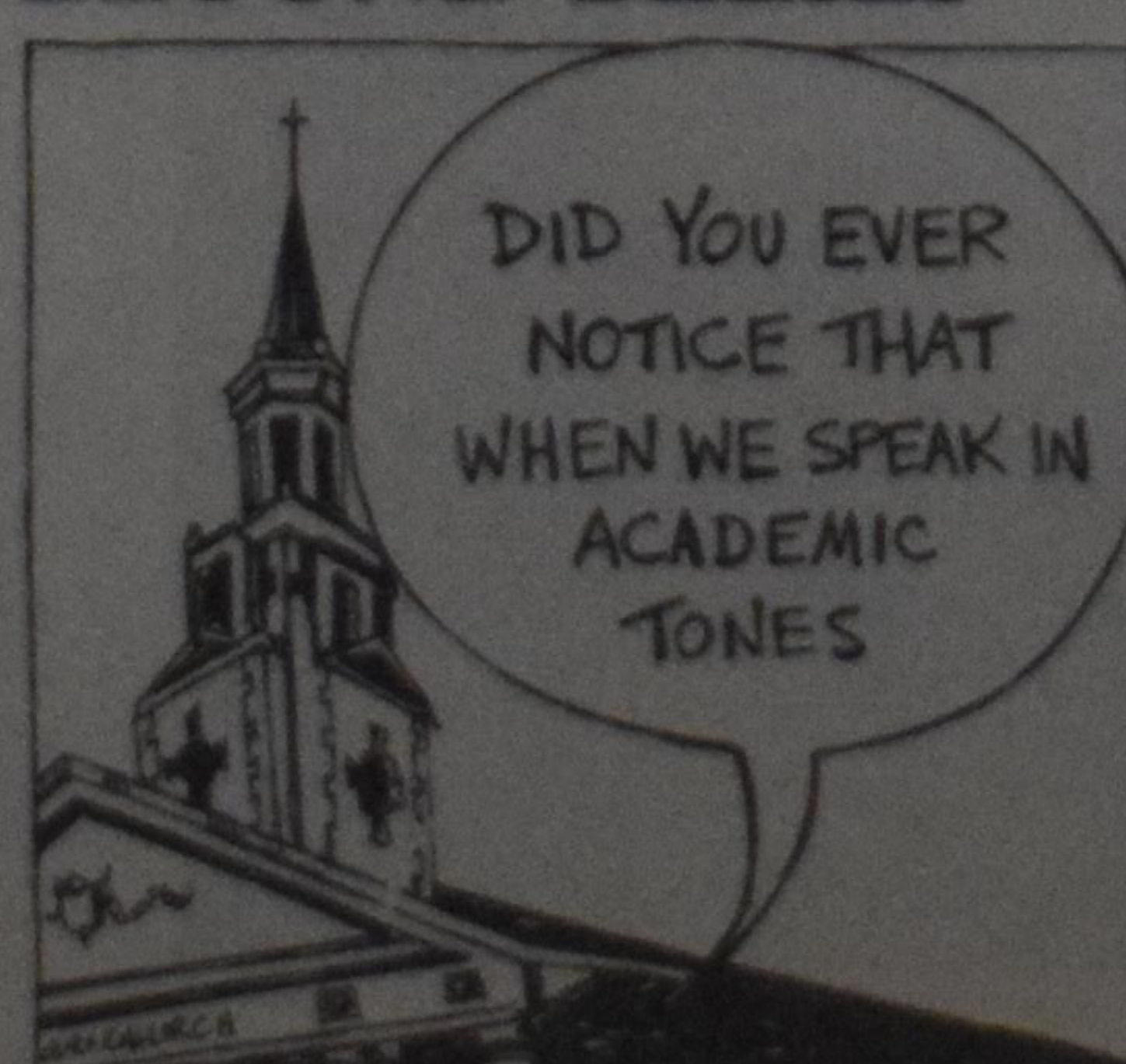
Why does Robert VanderVennen have to review the *Portraits of Creation* book (Nov. 2, 1990), which pushes the evolution view? That is like asking a communist to critique one of Marx's books. He writes that the authors "argue against a literalistic interpretation of the Bible and against a worldview which is not free to accept the results of scientific research regarding the age of the earth." Because we "creationists" believe in the Bible, it does not mean we are not "free" to accept results of scientific research.

Creation scientists do scientific research but the professors will not give them their due. Instead, they (and Dr. VanderVennen) insist on sticking to their world(ly?) view. Then Dr. VanderVennen has the nerve to hope aloud that the evolution ideas will be found someday in the [Christian

Reformed] Acts of Synod. What's going on here? A more balanced approach to book reviewing would be more honouring to God.

Carl Buys  
Beamsville, Ont.

## BEYOND BELIEF



## 'Anglo' Christian scholars' views ethnocentric, racist

The article "Christian scientists ambivalent about building Canada with a cultural mosaic," printed in the Nov. 16, 1990, issue of *Calvinist Contact*, is a clear indicator of how racism is alive and well.

As a person who is not Anglo, I am offended by a philosophy which implies that homogeneity, or more specifically, Anglo-Christian, is right and anything that deviates from that is a threat.

It is devastating to have an evangelical Protestant scholar such as Clark Pinnock being quoted that Anglo is Christian and multicultural is secular. A white supremacist couldn't have said it better. If Mr. Pinnock can prove to me from Scripture that Anglo and Christian is synonymous then I will have to accept the fact that Christ did not die for my sins. And if Mr. Pinnock is so concerned about assimilation, why is he not fighting for Canadian society to be like the Native Canadian people who were certainly living in Canada before white people came. And if those comments were not bad enough, according to the article, "John Kimble Abbot spoke against the cultural mosaic, wanting Canada to restrict immigration lest the nation move too far from its northern European cultural heritage."

### Preserving 'our own'

Many of the statements made by participants reflect a strong ethnocentrism. The call for the preservation of a particular ethnic group over against the cultural mosaic which does exist reminds me of Hitler's attempts to preserve Arianism and

South Africa's policies on apartheid. Henry Regehr's advocacy for an "environmental assessment" before Canada goes ahead with any plans for large scale immigration seems ironic given the history of Canada. I am sure the Native Canadians would like to have had this opportunity during the 1700s.

I agree with the panel that these issues must be examined from a Christian perspective. Unfortunately, the comments made by certain individuals on the panel were not Christian and we must not allow Satan to continue to divide us; we are all created in God's image.

The God that I serve, and the Christ who died for my sins, affirms and values people from every nation, tribe, and language (Rev. 5:9,10). And it is this same God that Peter claims as a God that shows no favouritism (Acts 10:34,35). My God is a God who affirms diversity and describes his church as a multicultural mosaic (Isaiah 56:1-7; Rev. 5:9,10; Rev. 7:9,10).

This is the Christian perspective from which we must examine the issues. Mr. Pinnock, Mr. Abbot, and Mr. Regehr examined the issues from a very ethnocentric, humanistic, self-centred perspective. They should be ashamed for demeaning God and his creation of people who are not Anglo. I will pray for the Holy Spirit to change their hearts on this matter.

Bing Goei

Executive Director

Christian Reformed Church Synodical  
Committee on Race Relations  
Grand Rapids, Mich.

## Symbolism can't be applied to real events?

After reading the Commentary of Dec. 14, 1990, by Dr. Al Wolters my question now is whether our Lord's miraculous birth, death, resurrection and ascension must also be figuratively and symbolically read since these events (recorded in Scripture) also cannot be understood from the scientific human mind.

Joanne Bakker  
St. Catharines, Ont.

### Response from Al Wolters:

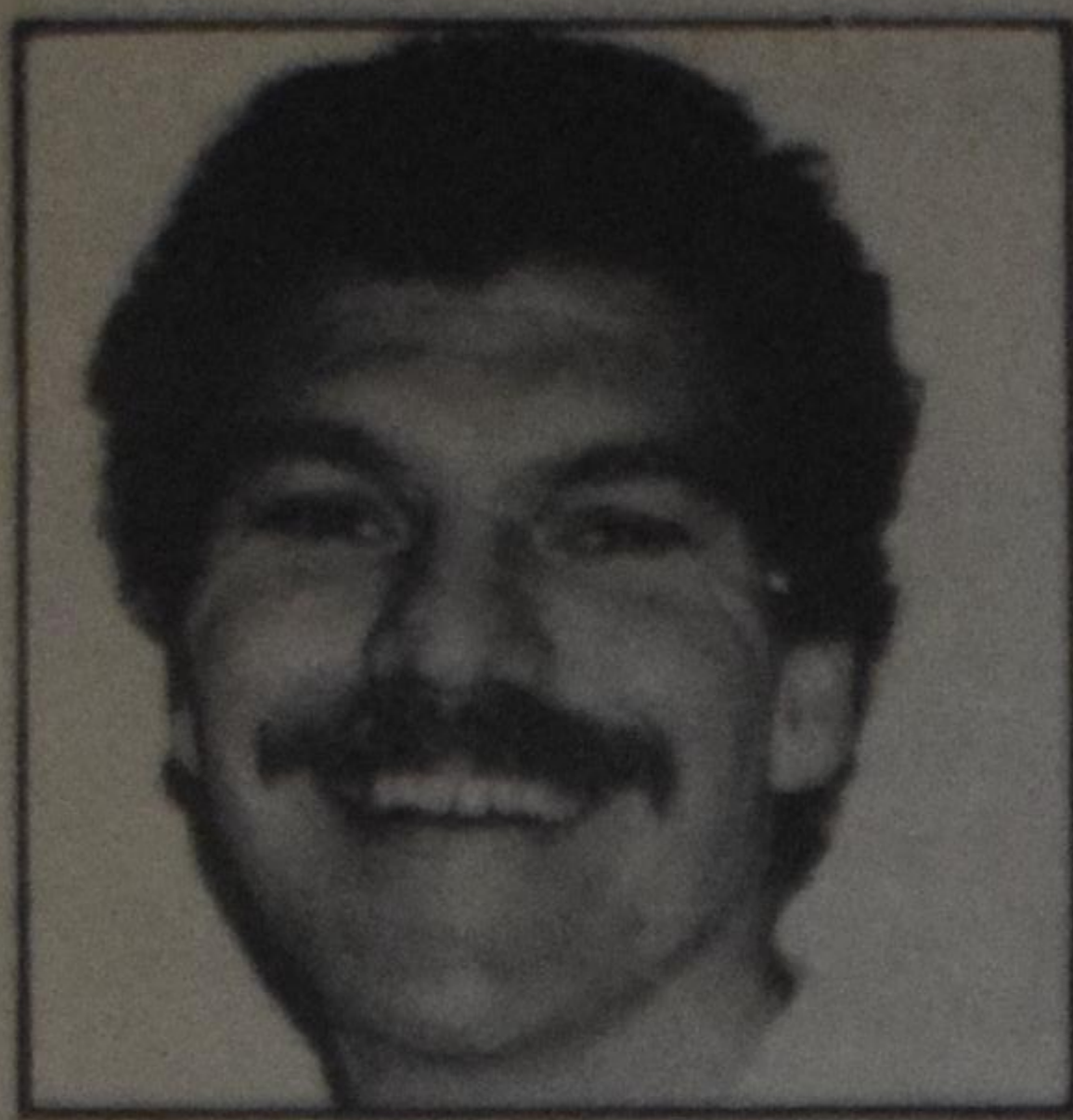
Symbolism and history are not mutually exclusive. My understanding of this issue is perhaps best expressed in the recently released report of the Christian Reformed Church study committee on creation and science which I chaired.

"However stylized, literary or symbolic the stories of Genesis may be,

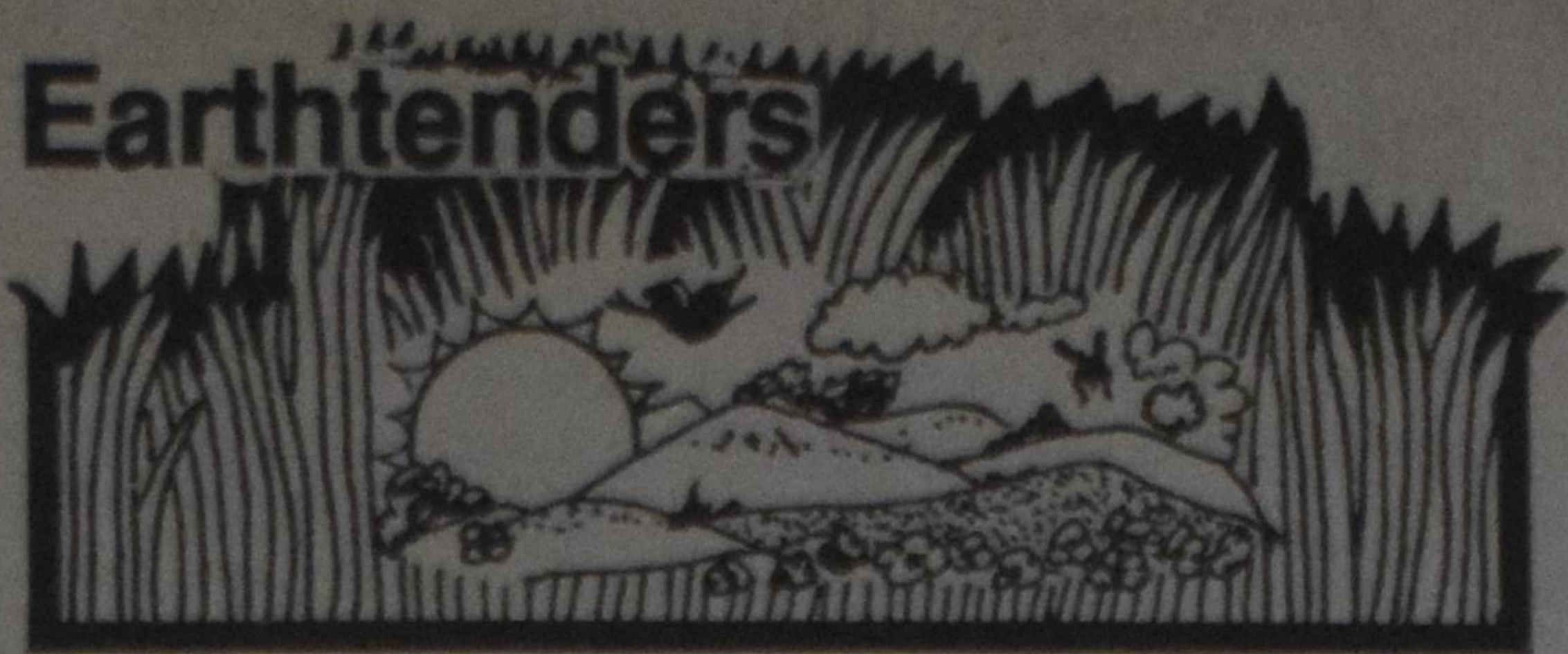
they are clearly meant to refer to real events. Especially in the case of God's acts of creation, Adam and Eve as first parents, the fall of humanity into sin, and the giving of the so-called mother promise (Gen. 3:15), the reality of the events described is of foundational importance for the entire history of redemption. It is the presupposition of the New Testament and historic Christian orthodoxy. Any interpretation which calls into question the event character of the story told in these first and fundamental chapters of the Bible must be firmly rejected, whatever difficulties this may cause with respect to the scientific evidence" (section VI, J).

I would say that something similar holds for the New Testament.





Harry Spaling



Our place and task in the environment

## There's more where that came from — or is there?

The history of Canada is the history of its resources. Canada has always relied on its vast wealth of plants, animals, minerals and soils for economic development — especially for primary industries such as agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

Two centuries ago, the seemingly infinite supply of whales, fish, beaver and buffalo fueled the non-Native

exploration of Canada. European settlers soon trailed behind in a leap-frog pattern across the country as they staked claims to virgin prairie soils. Forestry and mining industries quickly followed to harvest and extract untouched reserves of timber and minerals. More recently, oil and gas discoveries provided the fuel for an energy-based industrial economy.

Throughout this history there is a trend of sequential exploitation of one resource after another. A resource would be exploited to the maximum extent possible and when the resource started to decline, three things generally happened.

### Get it however you can

First, the shortage of a resource in one area led to a

search for and exploitation of the resource in new areas. Harvesting of accessible beaver in Eastern Canada led to the continual westerly search for more beaver.

Second, the rising cost of searching in new places led to the harvesting of less preferable but still marketable substitutes, starting the exploitation cycle all over again, often for many levels of substitution. When blue whales were almost killed off in the 1940s, the whaling industry switched to fin whales. When fin stocks declined in the 1960s they were replaced by Sei whales which, in turn, were recently substituted by sperm whales.

Third, declining supplies and rising prices prompted changes in technology which increased still further the efficiency of resource exploitation, sometimes beyond the capacity of the resource to recover. Improvements in net design, fishing methods and boat speed increased the catch size of a range of commercial fish

species in Lake Erie to the point where less preferred species such as smelt and yellow perch are now the mainstay of the fishing industry.

Unfortunately, these trends are not confined to Canadian history. They are still very evident today in the way resources are treated. Fishing stocks are so depleted in the famous Grand Banks off Canada's East Coast that the federal government is reducing fishing quotas, much to the detriment of an already depressed industry in the Maritimes. In the prairies, a century of cultivation has reduced the nitrogen and organic matter content of formerly rich soils by about 50 per cent. Canada's forest industry is coming under increasing attack because trees are not replanted at the same rate as they are cut down and the few remaining old-growth stands are being threatened.

### Insatiable appetite

The resource appetite of Canada's economy is continually searching for new resources to exploit. Oil and gas reserves near population centres are nearing depletion so energy policy and fiscal policy encourage exploration and development in places further away, such as the Arctic or offshore. As the price of conventional oil and gas supplies rise, alternative sources such as the Alberta oil sands become affordable substitutes. With further price hikes, the technological and economic justification for nuclear energy becomes more pronounced.

Whether mammals, fish, forests, soils, or fossil fuels, an economy based on exploitation of resources which is more rapid than the recovery of those resources cannot be sustained indefinitely. For ecological reasons Canada's resource-based economy is dangerously non-sustainable.

Why do we persist in our non-sustainable approach to resources? One reason is that monetary motives which guide resource-based economies do not consider ecological notions such as rates of sustainable recovery. Another reason is that a perception of limitless resources exists. Economies assume that growth can expand forever, moving from resource to resource.

Ecological reality dictates that economic exploitation of resources cannot be sustained forever. Much more attention needs to be given to ecological considerations so that Canada may better manage and preserve its remaining natural resources. Without ecological sustainability there cannot be economic sustainability.

*Harry Spaling is a doctoral student in geography at the University of Guelph, Guelph, Ont.*

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BUT WE ALL HAVE  
TO DO THE HOUSEWORK.





## Media

### The Russia House

Rated PG

Stars Sean Connery, Michelle Pfeiffer, James Fox, Roy Scheider, Klaus Maria Brandauer, John Mahoney  
Directed by Fred Schepisi  
Based on the novel by John le Carre

Anyone who expects spy thrillers to consist of virtually non-stop action, hi-tech gadgets and weapons, steamy love scenes, edge-of-the-seat suspense, double-crosses and characters who are not what they seem will be sorely disappointed with *The Russia House*. There's not a bullet-riddled body — or any kind of body — in sight; and the most complicated gadgets are headsets and a voice-activated listening device.

Though definitely a spy movie *The Russia House* is not a "thriller," unlike a number of other John le Carre stories. More than anything else it is a fairly literate character study — and a showcase for Russian land- and cityscapes.

Sean Connery is a natural to play British publisher and Russophile Bartholomew Scott Blair, known simply as Barley. Though he's gotten into drinking too heavily over the years, Barley is principled — at least he *talks* principles quite nicely. But he has enough self-awareness to realize that he hasn't risen above life's mundane pleasures and pains often enough to know whether he would have the courage to translate his principles into action if such action were to exact a cost from him. Barley's knowledge of his own shortcomings is an endearing quality and the one around which the story is woven. (At one point he colourfully describes himself to someone who will be meeting him and has never seen him before as being the man who looks like "an unmade bed with a shopping bag attached.")

#### Astonishing information

Barley is drawn to the Soviet Union periodically by international book fairs in Moscow and by his love for the place. On one of his visits he meets a man introduced as Dante, a man who, he finds out later, is a high-ranking physicist. Dante listens to Barley's principled talk and decides he will trust the publisher. Via a friend named Katya — a young divorced woman with two children (played with passable authenticity by Michelle Pfeiffer) — Dante sends Barley a manuscript.

But this manuscript is not just some forlorn attempt at a first novel. It is information which would drive the final nail into the Cold War coffin and help shut down the West's military-industrial complex: the Soviet Union's vaunted military capability was a sham, Dante alleges, and his information seems to prove it. (There are, of course, those in both the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. who — largely to save face and their own hides — would not want such information shouted to the world.)

British intelligence intercepts the manuscript, alerts the Americans, and together they attempt to find out who Dante is and if what he charges is true. Their key to ferreting out that information is Barley.

#### What is integrity?

If Barley allows himself to be followed and his conversations with Katya and Dante to be recorded, is he betraying his Russian friends, or are they all on the same side, wanting the same thing in the end? What, on the other hand, if Barley goes ahead, as Dante urges, and publishes the manuscript (of which he has finally been given a copy)?

In following Barley through this episode, *The Russia House* doesn't take the turns one might expect; that is one of its strengths. The characters too — the British and American intelligence people, for example — are not the flat-surfaced stereotypes that populate the James Bond films. It is regrettable, though, that despite Australian director Schepisi's obvious love for the Russian landscape there are few real Soviet citizens in sight and none in major roles. There are the extras in the marketplaces, of course, but despite some good acting one feels the main characters to be aliens who are merely set down in, not a part of, this magnificent land. (The exception is Klaus Maria Brandauer's portrayal of the brief but important role of Dante; this highly gifted German actor makes a very convincing Russian and even manages to *look* Russian.)

The happy ending, too, seems somehow out of place — a sop to audiences who want to believe that all's well that ends well. When it comes down to it, the real star of this show is the Soviet Union: Moscow, Leningrad, village streets, city parks, awe-inspiring cathedrals and other monumental buildings — modern and ancient, rich and poor. Except for Moscow's Red Square, this is a setting unfamiliar to Western moviegoers. Schepisi's careful camera art is guaranteed to make you want to visit this complicated and enigmatic country. It is a setting that sears itself into one's memory, remaining long after the details of this film will be forgotten.

### Rock watchdog concerned over 'New Kids on the Block'

CARDIFF BY THE SEA, Calif. (EP) — Rock expert Al Menconi is raising a red flag over the teen-scream group New Kids on the Block.

The international pop stars are losing their innocent image as they experience huge success, says Menconi. Their four albums have sold over 15 million copies in the U.S.; their "900" numbers get as many as 100,000 calls per week; they collect an average of \$15 per concert-goer in merchandise sales at their performances; they've launched their own Saturday morning cartoon series; they've signed a huge endorsement deal with Coca Cola.

"Back in the September-October 1989 issue of our publication *Media Update*, we took a wait-and-see position on the growing New Kids phenomenon," explains Menconi, author of *Today's Music: A Window to your Child's Soul* (David C. Cook). "Sure, the group was fluffy fresh and innocently romantic, but we wondered if they would stay that way."

Menconi says the group's manager, Maurice Starr, has taken other seemingly innocent young groups and turned them into sexually-explicit "adults."

"It looks as if those changes are already beginning to occur," warns Menconi. "And we want concerned

parents, primarily of preteens, to be aware."

Besides reports of group members starting fights in airplanes and other "spoiled star" behaviour, their recent concert special on the Disney Channel raised questions about the group. "It wasn't so much the constant removal of the group member's shirts during the concert," wrote Dave Hart, research analyst for Menconi Ministries. "And it wasn't so much all those pelvic thrusts and bumps and grinds."

#### Losing their innocence

Hart said his concerns peaked during the song "She's My Cover Girl," which says, "I get up in the morning and I see your face / You're looking so good, everything's in place / Don't you know I could never make you sigh / Won't you stay here with me and be my bride?"

Hart wrote, "During this sexual innuendo, a little girl who appeared to be only about six years old gave the singer a rose. It was a tender moment, quickly marred by a shift to the other side of the stage where the singer proclaimed, 'I only wanna be with you — like this!' with two sharply pronounced pelvic thrusts. The girls screamed. The Kids all wagged their behinds at the teen and preteen audience. The girls screamed again. The singer stripped off his T-shirt. And

the girls screamed some more."

Hart observed that the New Kids audience is getting younger, and is more likely to include 8- to 12-year-olds, rather than the 16- to 18-year olds.

Menconi observed, "Many teen and preteen girls are gradually moving from simply liking the group to devotion and then obsession."

Menconi added, "A lot of parents think their kids' obsession with New Kids is harmless; they relate it to their attraction to the Beatles, Bobby Sherman or other teen idols from their generation. But the Kids' gradual preoccupation with suggestive performances and subtle sexuality in their songs are something parents should be aware of. A child's obsession with this, or any other group, can be a clue to the parent that the child is dealing with some spiritual and self-image issues."

Menconi suggests that parents of daughters who are New Kids fans sit down with their children and compare the group's "Cover Girl" song with Christian artist Margaret Becker's song, "Streets of Innocence," from her album, *The Reckoning*. "You can talk about how people lose their innocence over time by drifting closer and closer to the philosophy of human beings rather than the teachings of Jesus."

Al Menconi Ministries also recommends Christian artists such as D.C. Talk, Michael W. Smith, Arcade, Stephen Wiley, Chuckie P., and Heather & Kirsten as suitable role models and substitutes for the New Kids on the Block.

### Cinema summaries

Marian Van Til



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## Church

Marian Van Till, page editor

### 'Study-action kits' help Catholics confront sexual abuse

OTTAWA (CCCB) — A team of Canadian Catholic bishops, religious and laypeople is hard at work devising ways to prevent the sexual abuse of children. The special eight-member Committee on Sexual Abuse was appointed by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCB) a year ago. It is chaired by Roger Ebacher, the Archbishop of Gatineau-Hull.

The committee is in the process of sending out study-action kits to all Canadian parishes. "The purpose of the kits," says Bernard Daly, assistant general secretary of the CCCB, "is to help people at the local level to know more about the issue, but also to draw them into doing something."

The kits provide for as many as six workshop sessions in

which parishioners will try to discern why sexual abuse by some members of the clergy has occurred, and why it occurs with increasing and disturbing frequency in society at large. The workshops will also look at how child abuse can be prevented, and how the Church can move toward healing, reconciliation and forgiveness.

"We hope," says Daly, "that Catholics at the local level will move into action to decrease, and we hope, to eliminate sexual abuse."

#### Feedback important

He says that feedback from the discussion in parishes will be important to the Sexual Abuse Committee as it goes about its work at the national level.

The Committee on Sexual Abuse has also established four working groups to be led by

experts. They include one which will advise on how dioceses can extend pastoral care to sexual abuse victims and their families.

Another group will review earlier guidelines sent out by

the CCCB to help dioceses deal promptly and openly with cases of sexual abuse when they arise.

Still other expert groups will advise on how to care for abusers now and in the future,

and another group will make recommendations toward improved guidelines and policies for accepting candidates to the priesthood and religious life.

### Portugal's evangelicals gain right to teach religion in public schools

LISBON, Portugal (EP) — Portugal's evangelicals will start ministering in public schools during this academic year as a result of a recent law that breaks the monopoly of the Catholic Church in this field, according to World Evangelical Fellowship.

Since 1926, when Antonio Salazar came to power and ruled as a dictator in the poverty-stricken country adjacent to Spain, only the Roman Catholic Church has had the right to conduct religious classes in public schools. These courses have been required.

However, after the lobbying efforts of the Commission for Evangelical Education Action in Public Schools (COMACEP), a working commission under authority of the Portuguese Evangelical Alliance and the Portuguese Council of Christian Churches, the government approved a law that any religion may be taught in a school in which 15 students sign a petition requesting that such an option be made available. These courses will be elective and offered during school hours.

#### Prepared for the change

Immediately after the law was passed, 300 students responded, asking for optional religious classes in 34 different schools. Isabel Pinheiro, the COMACEP co-ordinator, said

that the commission has already been able to appoint evangelical Christian teachers for all of these schools. Teachers must meet educational requirements and be active members of local evangelical churches. COMACEP has also prepared a basic curriculum for teachers to use in the classroom.

The Portuguese Association of Evangelical Teachers in Public Schools (AOOCE) has for several years been mobilizing teachers to be faithful witnesses in the schools, assisting them with materials, annual conferences and a network for the exchange of ideas. Even before the law was passed several evangelical teachers in a few public schools had dared to start experimental Bible study groups, according to the report. This initiative helped pave the way for the development of new opportunities under the recent law.

In an article which appeared in the daily Portuguese newspaper *Expresso*, Rosa Pedrosa Lima noted approvingly that the evangelicals were the only group prepared to take advantage of the opportunities afforded by the new law.

"Right away," she wrote, "the evangelicals advanced on the field." Evangelicals number less than two per cent of Portugal's 10.4 million population.

#### News/Opinion

### Report presents 'important perspective' on creation and science

Robert VanderVennen

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — The long-awaited study committee report to the Christian Reformed Church synod on creation and science is a solid statement of the traditional Dutch Calvinist position on "general" and "special revelation" which presents a carefully defined but valued place for scientific research within the broad scope of God's revelation.

The report criticizes Calvin College professor Howard Van Till's use of "primeval history" and his concept of "packaging and content" as ways of understanding the meaning of the Bible's account of Creation. It also criticizes him implicitly in its call for careful peer review of potentially disruptive ideas. Although the committee was not asked to judge Van Till's orthodoxy, his views and those of some of his colleagues prompted this fundamental study.

An extensive appendix describes the mechanisms by which the sciences think the cosmos and its contents may have come into existence in their present state following the "big bang."

The report can be understood as a statement of how religious truth established long ago can serve as a mariner's guide through the treacherous rapids of today's science. The chief buoys are Augustine, John Calvin, Abraham Kuyper, Herman Bavinck and occasionally Louis Berkhof. We are given reaffirmed theology along with fresh advice on reading what the Bible says about origins.

#### Reiterates long-held truths

This solidly historical statement of special and general revelation as verbal and nonverbal, different yet interdependent, is badly needed. The divine authority of general revelation is emphasized in the context of a quotation from Berkhof, "Scripture can be fully understood only against the background of God's revelation in nature." The fall into sin did not erode the content of general revelation nor destroy its authority, the report states. Sin turned humanity into an unfaithful respondent to this revelation, so that we need the "spectacles" of Scripture to enable us to read God's revelation in creation faithfully. The committee concludes that general revelation is the manifestation of God's wisdom in the world and, as Calvin puts it, scientists penetrate into aspects of God's wisdom that are hidden to others.

We should not put our thinking about human knowledge and divine revelation into separated compartments, the report insists. Human knowledge, including science, is at bottom a religious affair. Knowledge always involves faith.

#### Historical writing of Genesis 1-11

Sciences like archaeology, anthropology and history have helped us understand more clearly what kind of historical writing we have in Genesis 1-11, the report says. Although there is

no consensus among evangelical scholars on the character of that biblical history, all agree that the Bible contains no scientific-like statements or propositions. As Calvin said, if you want to learn astronomy go to the astronomers, not to the Bible.

We are told that the church should not adopt specific interpretive or exegetical theories about Genesis 1 and 2. Some Christians want to learn from Genesis when and how God created the world, but the report says, "It has been widely accepted among us that the age of humanity or of the universe is of no consequence for maintaining orthodoxy." It states that the early chapters of Genesis contain highly stylized, compressed and symbolic accounts of history which should not be interpreted as though the writing were a human eyewitness account. But we may not call into question whether the writings are about events that really happened. They are not parables.

#### God did it, we don't know how

The theory of evolution is discussed at length but is not condemned outright. Standing firmly on clear biblical and theological convictions, the authors of the report say that there are too many uncertainties in our knowledge for the church to endorse clear and simple answers to the hard questions of origins. Even a lifetime of study may not be enough, we are told.

The report says that no one has enough knowledge to have a completely satisfactory solution to the problem of origins. Therefore we all need to recognize that criticisms of our own views about origins will be at least partly valid. Christians should give each other room to hold different views. Scientific and theological theories should not become idols, carved in stone. We live with a tension that is not likely to lessen in the near future. We should not try to escape by turning to young-earth creationism.

The report affirms that God created man and woman in his image, and that "Adam and Eve, the progenitors of the human race, fell into sin and thus brought the whole of humanity under God's judgment of death." Two members of the committee want the church to go further than this and say that all theories that say that Adam and Eve had pre-human ancestors should be ruled out.

I think this would be a dangerous thing for the church to say. Remember Galileo. Biblical interpretation has changed many times over history as a result of new discoveries. It would be much better for the church to emphasize positively the uniqueness of humankind in the image of God and the crucial character of Adam and Eve as the first humans.

This report gives valuable religious grounding in a time of great confusion and conflict. It should be widely read and discussed. The report has been mailed to all Christian Reformed congregations, who have permission to photocopy it. It can also be purchased from the Stated Clerk's office in Grand Rapids, Mich., for \$3 U.S.

**Send your questions to  
Peter and Marja  
c/o Calvinist Contact.  
Confidentiality is assured.**





## A Presbyterian Comments

Robert J. Bernhardt

For most of its history in North America a church could assume that local outreach could safely be directed to people who were much like themselves. While this assumption was not always correct it is easy to understand how it could be made. Most of the people in the church neighbourhood probably came from the same ethnic origins as did the congregation. They shared a similar history. Indeed, most people had probably had some association with the church, in childhood if not as adults. However, at least in urban settings, that situation has been changed for longer than we might care to acknowledge.

A few years ago I was part of a committee to meet with the remaining members of an inner-city congregation. The immediate issue really amounted to the question of

what to do with or for a dying congregation. They had a large old sanctuary that could easily accommodate several hundred, but the weekly worshipping congregation consisted of about 50 senior citizens.

### Fortress mentality

As I listened to these people relate their story I was struck by one recurring theme. They talked about how the church neighbourhood had changed over the period of some 30 years. It had gone from being one that was perceived to be a hospitable atmosphere for them to one that was now seen as almost impenetrable or even hostile.

It was also clear that the congregation's present situation had not come about suddenly. However, as long as there had been enough people and enough dollars to keep the doors open there had been an

inability or unwillingness to ask really challenging questions about this church's ministry. Members had opted to preserve a congregation that matched their traditional images of what a church ought to be without analysing whether or not their circumstances suggested that change was desirable.

By the time reality was acknowledged it was too late. The people were too old. Their image in the community was too firmly established. They no longer had the personal and financial resources to mount some aggressive campaign of evangelism and compassion in the community. Everything had been consumed by the fight to survive. There were no longer any real choices. All that remained were some practical decisions about how to wind up the affairs of the congregation and what to do with the

property.

### Hiding your light

There was real pain in the situation! A congregation which had had a very illustrious past would be gone. A place associated with many personal and family memories was to be a thing of the past. Even former members who had years before left the "old" church to participate in other congregations felt the pain of the death.

The one thing that impressed itself on me was that even at the end, this church still did not know its neighbourhood. The survival mentality had so predominated that no one had had the time or the energy to really explore what the options might have been. Was there some other form of Christian ministry or Christian service that could have demonstrated the grace and peace of Christ in

that place? To me that was the real sorrow. It did not appear that these options had ever seriously been explored.

Admittedly, I hadn't had personal links with that congregation's glorious past. And while there is always regret when any chapter in Christian service comes to a close, the present and future ministry of the Gospel must have priority. We cannot preserve what by the grace of God once was, at the expense of neglecting what by the grace of God might be. Congregations in our culture which cannot recognize and respond to their changing setting in a changing world are doomed to struggle to survive at the expense of really living.

*Robert Bernhardt is pastor of Chalmers Presbyterian Church, Hamilton, Ont.*

## Guatemalan radio station is 'electronic John the Baptist'

LAS CASAS, Guatemala (EP) — A radio station run by Baptists in a remote, mountainous region of Guatemala is known as the "electronic John the Baptist" because of its regular ministry of carrying personal messages to the inhabitants of the wilderness area.

The "Greetings" program, which receives about 400 letters per month to be read by announcers, also prompts letters of a spiritual nature.

"I want to know if the gods that man makes with his hands really have power," one Catholic woman wrote. "I need to know if it's true that they give us life ... or if these are pure lies. I need to know which is the way that leads to God." Such questions give the announcers, each a K'ekchi' Baptist minister, a chance to offer a few moments of on-the-air counsel about the Christian faith.

One writer requested that the radio announce to a friend: "It's very important that you come to see your mother because she is very sick." Another writer, living in a neighbouring country, wrote to tell his younger brother, "I'm doing fine here. I'm working. Don't worry about me."

### Prime means of contact

Telephones are rare in Las Casas in the north-central area of Guatemala, home to about 400,000 K'ekchi' Indians. The program, called "Greetings" and aired for two hours each

morning and one hour in the evening, has become a key means of communication among relatives and friends scattered throughout the region's tree-laden mountains, coffee-plantation foothills and jungle lowlands.

"It's the nerve centre of the K'ekchi' culture," claims David Daniell of Houston, a Southern Baptist media missionary who worked for five years with K'ekchi' Baptists to launch the shortwave station in March of 1988.

"A multitude of people" listen to the radio station, according to Andres Xo, pastor of the largest of the 135 congregations in the K'ekchi' Baptist Association. "They listen because it is in our language."

The radio station also serves as a platform for spreading the Gospel, and Radio K'ekchi' "also devotes plenty of time to spiritual programming," according to Art Toalston of Baptist Press. The station airs regular half-hour programs produced by 45 K'ekchi' Baptist congregations.

The spiritual fruit of the broadcasting effort is also evident according to those who have worked with the station. Jose May, a coffee plantation labourer, began listening on a simple shortwave set in the village of Benipec, which means "on top of the rock" in the K'ekchi' language.

"He began to hear the truth," said Jim McGriff of Elmore, Alabama, a

missionary co-worker with the K'ekchi' Baptists. "He had never really heard the truth before in a way he could understand. Before long he made a commitment to the Lord."

A few weeks later May walked four hours down the mountainside to visit a Baptist mission church. He said he had friends in his village who also were listening to Radio K'ekchi', and McGriff related, told leaders there that "somebody needed to take the Good News to them." The

mission started sending a team to the village to conduct services and within two months 29 people had become Christians there.

Another major outreach of Radio K'ekchi' occurs right on the station grounds, say radio workers. "Fifty to 74 folks would show up at the station almost every day," recalls Tom Dufresne, an aircraft electronics worker from San Angelo, Texas, who has made two volunteer trips to the station to do technical troubleshooting. "People were

walking in from all parts of the forest and the mountains. I saw several people come to know the Lord while I was there."

Radio K'ekchi' staff members credit Daniell with providing indispensable help in starting the station. "If he had not come to help us, we wouldn't know how to do radio work," said Gilberto Sun Nicol, director of Radio K'ekchi'. "He gave his heart to the work."

## Colloquium to assess future of Mennonite, Brethren in Christ peace theology

WINNIPEG, Man. — "Mennonite Peace Theology into the '90s — Where have we come from? Where are we going?" is the theme of the Sixth Peace Theology Colloquium to be held June 21-23, 1991, at Columbia Bible College in Clearbrook, B.C.

According to colloquium planning committee member Peter Penner, co-director of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada's Peace and Social Concerns department, the colloquium will "feature dialogue between peace theologians, church leaders, educators and others. It will be a time to assess the current state of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ peace theology and to answer the question posed by God to Hagar in Genesis 16:8: 'Where have you come from and where are you going?'"

Feature presentations will be

made by J.R. Burkholder, a writer and former professor at Goshen College and Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, who will speak about "Mennonite Peace Commitment Since 1945." Burkholder will examine the various strains of peace theology which have developed among Mennonites and Brethren in Christ since World War II. He will be followed by Leo Driedger, professor of sociology at the University of Manitoba and chair of the Church Member Profile II Administrative Committee, who will speak about "Current Understanding and Practice of Peace Among Various Mennonite Conferences."

Discussion and responses to the presentations will follow. Howard Loewen of Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary (MBBS) will respond to

Burkholder's presentation; John E. Toews, also of MBBS, Richard Showalter, president of Rosedale Bible Institute and Ralph Lebold, director of Pastoral Leadership Training of the Mennonite Conference of Eastern Canada, will respond to the presentation by Driedger.

In order to focus peace theology agenda for the next decade, the colloquium will also feature case studies on environmental issues, racism and domestic violence.

Registration fee for the Colloquium is \$30 (\$25 U.S.). Meals and lodging will be available at Columbia Bible College for \$45.

For more information, or to register, contact: Peace Theology Colloquium, 134 Plaza Dr., Winnipeg, MB R3T 5K9 (204) 261-6381. In B.C. contact: MCC B.C., Box 2038, Clearbrook, BC V2T 3T8 (604) 850-6639.



## Religious quests in an age of materialism (5) Mother Earth Spirituality

John Valk

*To a few but increasing number of people the destructive tendencies of our society evoke considerable emotional pain. Regret, shock, even abhorrence, wells up inside as we hear of yet more devastation heaped on this our beautiful but vulnerable earth. On the only known planet capable of sustaining life, many foolishly commit offenses against it, threatening that very life. According to Mother Earth Spirituality (MES), those offenses spring from our materialistic, individualistic and short-sighted lifestyles.*

From the perspective of MES this style of living results from our anthropocentric focus: our society is basically *human-centred*. All is done for the maximum pleasure and comfort of *us*, frequently at the expense of other living plant and animal species.

Furthermore, this spiritualist movement argues that our society is also *male-centred*. Dominant is the male lust for power — driven by aggression, greed and destruction. Lacking is the maternal emotion or caring attitude, the one which nurtures, preserves and sacrifices for others.

Might these human-centred and male-centred orientations explain, at least in part, the

ecological and cultural predicaments we face today? That is the claim of MES.

### 'Progress'

Many with sentimental feelings toward the planet have been variously labelled by others as earthniks, peaceniks or, now more respectfully, environmentalists. The major concern of such people has been to inform the public, sometimes in rather deviant ways, that our present course of development seriously jeopardizes the future of our planet. They have received considerable opposition to their efforts, not least from the more zealous entrepreneurial types who view them as blocking "progress."

Now that sufficient ecological alarm bells have been sounded and greater or lesser degrees of environmental concern and sensitivity have been awakened in most of us, many are beginning to see that our notion of "progress" may need to be understood in a broader context. Many people, David Suzuki not being the least, argue convincingly that unharnessed economic progress not only seriously retards quality of life but also threatens our very survival.

We have here, of course, a case of divided interests. What is becoming obvious is that individual interests, divided or not, have very wide ramifications, many of which are not always taken into account. Furthermore, and not so obvious to all, is that human interests have to do with a deeper underlying spirituality. Many intimately concerned with the environment have seen that quite correctly.

### Our mother

For the most part, Western society has, until recently, regarded the earth as limitless in its resources and infinitely capable of absorbing our garbage and pollution. With our Newtonian world-view we treated the earth as a "thing" to be used (exploited) to satisfy our basic needs. Unfortunately, often we confuse needs with wants, and with sophisticated technology and insatiable appetites many have exercised a destructive "dominion" (greed).

According to advocates of MES, the earth is not an inanimate thing, nor solely for humans. The earth has a "spirit"; it lives, breathes and has "being." It is a giant living organism which in turn gives

being to all other living things inhabiting it. In this manner the earth is regarded as our "mother." Humans, as well, are intimately dependent on this "mother" for their very existence; they have no life apart from life on earth. Furthermore, just as no living thing, humans included, can live without "her," all species have a right to "her" for existence.

### Matricide

Most of us are now becoming quite consciously aware that we have an ecological crisis on our hands. Advocates of MES feel that our mother, the earth, is dying. Of all creatures, humans are the destructive ones and are slowly choking the life out of "her." By polluting the water, burning the forests, poisoning the food and land, humans are engaging in matricide. The "children" are killing the "mother." Her most intellectually, emotionally and spiritually developed offspring are consciously or unconsciously, through ignorance, naivete or pure carelessness, conspiring to destroy her. The irony is that with the death of the mother comes the sure death of the children.

Why are the children so intent on destroying the mother? Perhaps it has to do with a lack of a cosmic vision, claims Matthew Fox, a Catholic priest silenced by the Vatican for his unorthodox views. Fox is director of the Institute in Culture and Creation Spirituality in California. Many are so consumed with their own little "world," he asserts, that they fail to see the larger world burning. The aggressive, power hungry and profit-motivated

tendencies so dominant in the Western world potentially level all other "ways of being." As a result, the Mother Earth of tomorrow is being sacrificed for maximum pleasure and comfort today. Immediate gratification appears to be the West's all-consuming driving force.

### Infanticide

Along with matricide comes infanticide, according to MES. If Mother Earth is dying, then so are the youth. One may certainly gain such an impression in light of the rising statistics of teenage suicide, alcohol and drug dependency, depression and apathy. Combine these statistics with the countless reports of youthful lives destroyed emotionally by physical and sexual abuse and we have a rather dismal picture of the state of North America's youth. This is all the more shocking in a society bursting with individual material affluence. But, perhaps that is the problem.

It is due to our individual material pursuits, according to Fox and others, that our society has little room for its children. Thousands are consumed before they leave the womb. Many who do survive the womb face life-long economic, cultural or spiritual impoverishment. Rearing them is increasingly relegated to professionals because parents are all-consumed by career, mortgage or adult-oriented recreational pursuits, willfully or otherwise.

Furthermore, adults have borrowed so heavily on the future for their exorbitant standard of living and hawkish war-games that each child born is thousands of dollars in debt,

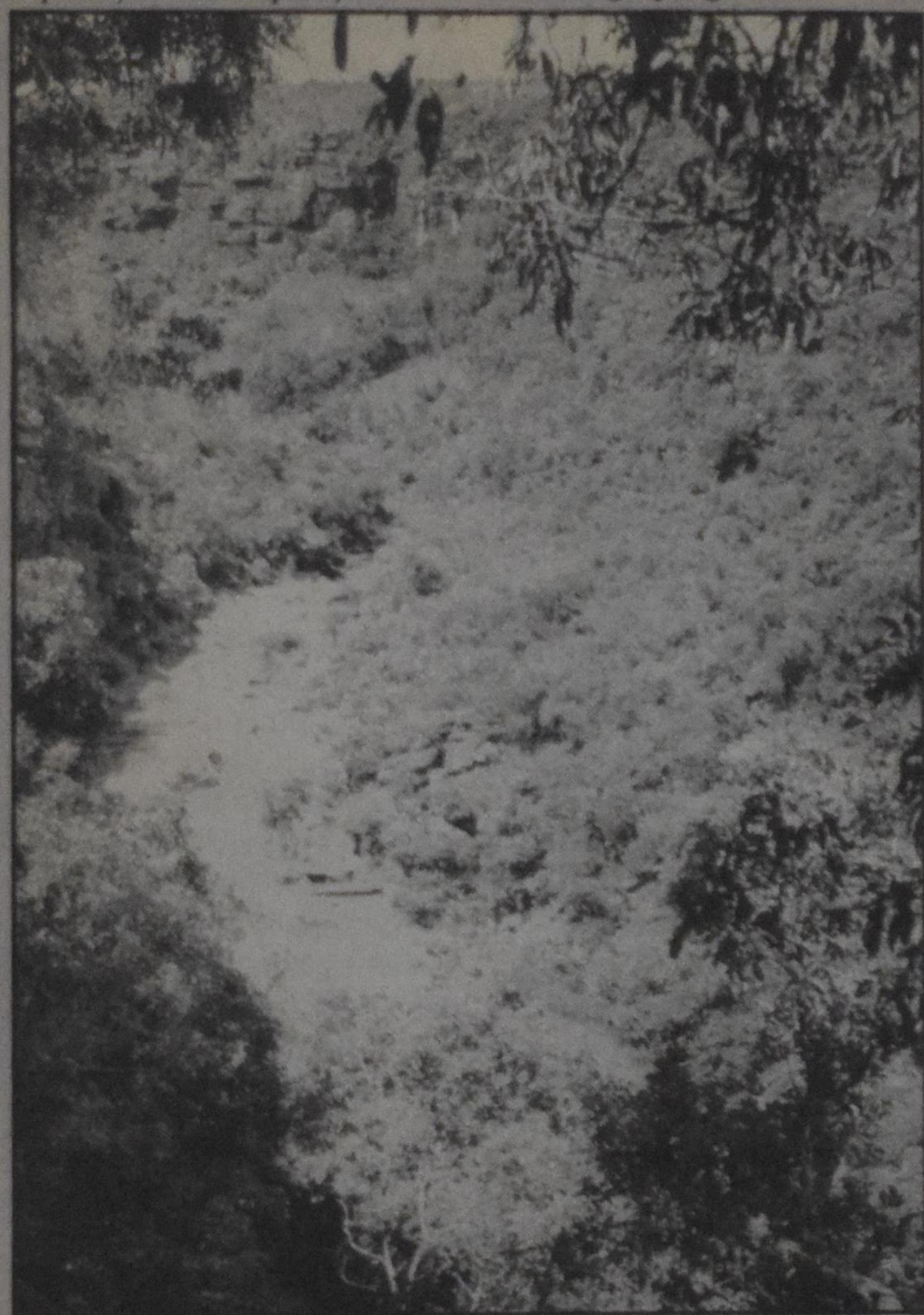


Photo: South African Panorama

"For the most part, Western society has, until recently, regarded the earth as limitless in its resources and infinitely capable of absorbing our garbage and pollution."



has a nuclear threat hanging over his or her head and absorbs a deflating sense of powerlessness. From whence comes our apathetic youth? ponders Fox. Where is youthful zest, creativity and adventure, if not prematurely overwhelmed and preoccupied with adult notions of getting a job and getting ahead?

### Hope in a hopeless situation

All is not lost yet, according to MES. Though Mother Earth is dying, she is not dead. There is hope despite the hopelessness. That hope is based on achieving a renewed sense of who we are and what we can be as humans living in a spirit-filled world. But what is needed is a renewed cosmology, not a renewed anthropology.

In order to gain a turnaround, however, our society will need to go beyond secularism, with its anthropological emphasis on the here and now and its (left) brain stuck in Enlightenment (rational) thinking. Humans need to be in tune with the cosmos. They need to abide by the norms of a world divinely, not accidentally, created. Above all, they need to acknowledge a God greater than the one they sometimes create in their image. God demands respect for fellow humans because they are sacred, God demands respect for the land because it, too, is sacred, and above all God simply demands respect because of who God is.

### Contemplating our changes

To come to a greater understanding and awareness of the importance of this

cosmological thinking, MES advocates the necessity of contemplation. Christian mystics, both past and present, have always placed great stress on meditation. For many, the highest spiritual good, therefore, was shunning the market place in favour of the monastery which provided the best opportunities for reflection. But, according to MES, that has resulted in a sacred/secular split. Engaging in daily work is as sacred as going to church (or the monastery). Even Luther recognized that.

Perhaps MES advocates are correct in stating that we today have largely forgotten about contemplation. Many of us seem to have an aversion to silence and meditation. Furthermore, MES advocates, as well as the Native peoples, claim that most others do not regard the land as sacred. Perhaps that is why many are so destructive in their market place activities. Would more cosmological reflection correct the devastating path we have chosen? That is the belief of MES.

### Blurring distinctions

There is much in MES that makes me stop and think. It forces me to re-examine my activities and lifestyle in light of the biblical, cultural mandate bestowed on humans. Western insensitivity to, and neglect of, the holy ground we inhabit has rubbed off all too much on Christians. The call for obedience in all things — love, work, leisure — requires of us a radical *metanoia*: a conversion demanding a change the likes of which we may be unaccustomed to and a sacrifice our secular world may never comprehend.

I do, nonetheless, feel uncomfortable with some of the ideas MES asserts or implies. I have great difficulty with what I see as a blurring of distinctions. First, MES is not too clear as to whether God is separate from, or identical to, the spirituality permeating "Mother Earth."

Second, I also do not quite know what to make of that spirituality. I can agree that the earth is a living, breathing organism. But I would not identify that living and breathing as a spirituality, least of all not in any manner similar to that possessed by humans.

Third, the distinctions between the various orders within the Creation are also not so clear. God crowned humans with a particular glory and

honour not bestowed on animals, plants and rivers. While all things are sacred because they come from the hand of the Creator, God has given his Creation to humans for a distinct purpose: not least to meet each person's need, though not each person's greed. We may use the plants, animals and rivers, though we may not abuse them.

Fourth, in our use, rather than abuse, of the "garden," we image God. For advocates of MES, imaging God appears to mean something quite different, perhaps only identifying with or preserving the spirit of Mother Earth. But, I would think that our cultural mandate requires more of us than just preserving God's Creation, even though at

present that appears to be an almost impossible task.

Finally, MES, while intimately conscious of sinful ways of humanity, appears to feel that the potential lies within us to change ourselves. Might that be so? Those in the Reformed tradition would affirm that we ought to "work out [our] own salvation in fear and trembling." But we also affirm that such is possible only because "God is at work in [us]" (Phil. 2:12-13). Going it any other way, while noble, will prove futile, as history has amply demonstrated.

*John Valk is the Christian Reformed Campus chaplain at the University of New Brunswick, Fredericton.*



Photo: C.C. files

*"While all things are sacred because they come from the hand of the Creator, God has given his Creation to humans for a distinct purpose: not least to meet each person's need, though not each person's greed."*



## Education

### Christian school kindergarten students play at learning and learn to play

Louisa F. Bruinsma

EDMONTON — "Look at my spaceship!" says David Snaterse, kindergarten student at East Edmonton Christian School as he proudly displays his elaborate Lego spaceship. "It has lights, see?"

"So does mine," pipes Lucas Budinski.

"Look at mine!" adds Benjamin de Graaf.

"Your spaceships are getting better every day," comments teacher Shirley Goutbeck.

"How about adding some trees to put around them?"

Kindergarten programs in all three Edmonton Christian schools are based on the philosophy that young children learn most through direct experiences — seeing, touching, tasting, smelling, hearing, doing, creating.

Shirley Goutbeck's kindergarten classroom is filled with centres where these activities are carefully organized and as carefully monitored. Students can work at a variety of centres — writing, painting, stitchery, sand and water, math manipulatives, blocks, listening, books, science, arts and crafts, play dough, play house and more.

"I add and change centres quite frequently," says Goutbeck. "A new centre is usually very popular with the students."

"Some students need to be encouraged to change centres, or they will always stay in the same one."

A new centre on arts and crafts has just been added. Each student is given a pre-cut Christmas tree made out of construction paper. With an assortment of colourful candy-coated cereal and macaroni to use as ornaments, students have to decorate the tree with as many ornaments as indicated by a number written on its trunk. Glitter is provided to add a finishing touch. When students are finished they check with the teacher or the parent volunteer of the day to see if it is right.

#### 'They didn't have that when I was a kid'

The playhouse is student Hannah Makepeace's favourite centre. "She loves the centres," says her father, David. "Watching her makes me wish I were that age again."

Makepeace is grateful to have a job that allows him the opportunity to spend time at the school. He has helped fix computers and has gone along on field trips. "It's great to be involved with the school," he says.

It's a comfort to him that his child can be in an environment where the values of his home

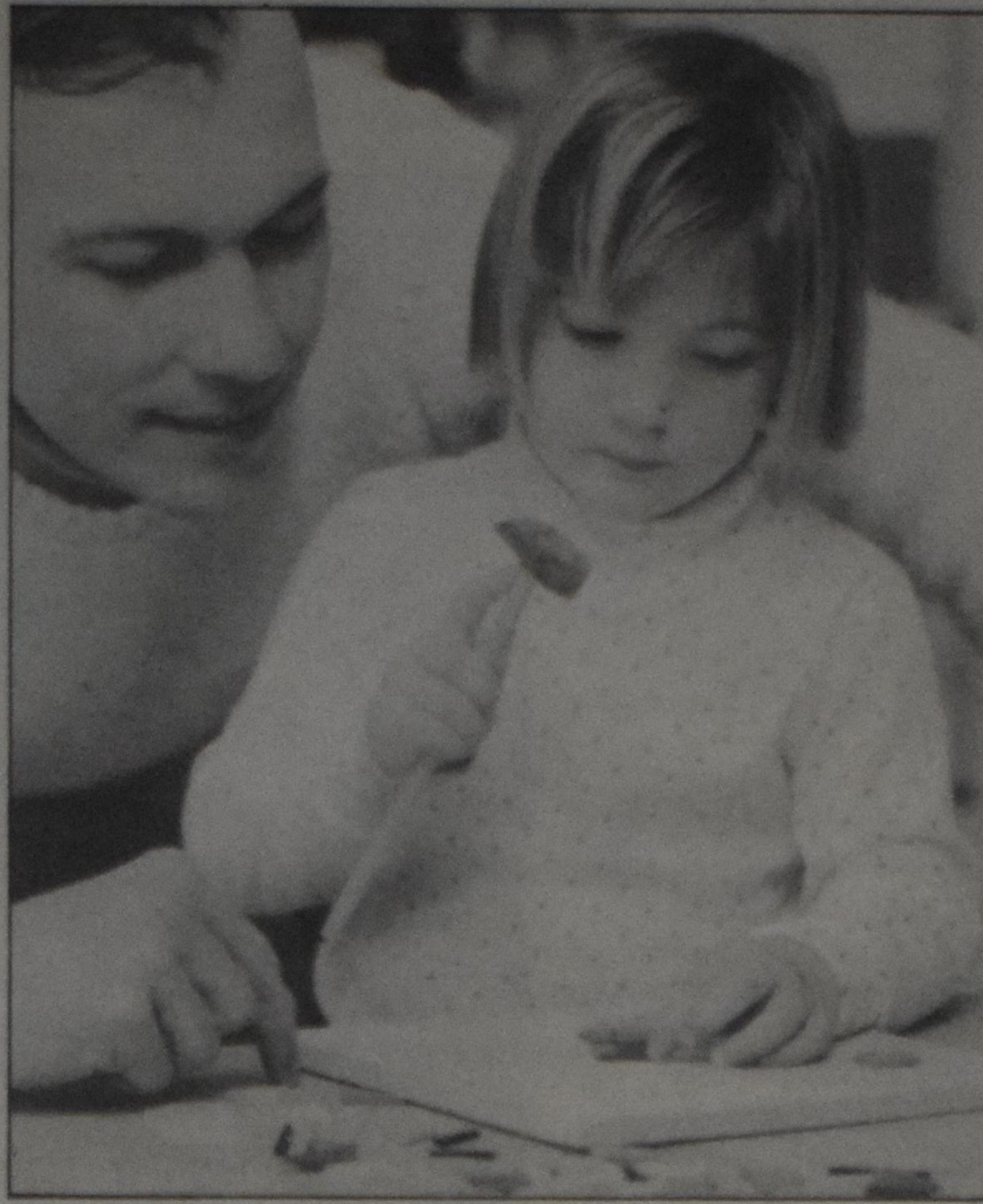


Photo: C.C. files

**"Kindergarten programs in all three Edmonton schools are based on the philosophy that young children learn most through direct experiences — seeing, touching, tasting, smelling, hearing, doing, creating."**

are reinforced. "The school is a natural progression from the home. In a Christian school you can assume the same

values."

Tena Siebenga is principal at East. "The kindergarten program operates out of a

Christian philosophy of education," she says. "Part of that philosophy is that for early childhood education, learning takes place through play."

For Goutbeck the rewards of being involved in this learning process are many. "I've seen some very real behavioural changes. And the kids have so many exciting things to tell you. And the hugs! And when I look over the room I think, 'Wow! Look at all the learning that is going on here!'"

Janet Greidanus has a son in kindergarten and serves on its local advisory committee. "East's Kindergarten provides a really comprehensive and well-rounded program," she says. "Kids are free to work and learn at their own pace. They love coming to school and Shirley is always sensitive to their individual needs."

The Edmonton Christian schools are operated by the Edmonton Society for Christian Education. The society operates three K-9 schools (East, North and West Edmonton Christian schools) and one high school (Edmonton Christian High School). Over 1,000 students are enrolled.

## Some thoughts on the place of Drama in Christian high schools

Robert L. Kooy

As Christians we often talk about the "Body of Christ" when referring to the Church as the worldwide group of believers. In a narrower context we take the "Body of Christ" to mean those people who, in their individual jobs and commitments, contribute to a faith community. Each person has unique skills and talents and is indispensable to the whole system. This unity-in-diversity theme regarding the occupations and duties of Christians runs strong in the Reformed tradition.

A variation on this theme has been consistently applied in high schools established by Reformed Christians. There are many disciplines that need to be taught. They range from the sciences and maths through geography, history, religion, literature and language, to physical education. There is great variety here but each discipline needs coverage because each provides partial, unique insight into the totality of God's creation.

How do acting and theatre fit into this picture? Can they provide insight as well? Have theatre and acting studies ever been considered worthy subjects to be taught?

I know that at the Christian college level there are theatre departments that do great things. If theatre, both at the theoretical and practical levels, is considered a full-fledged discipline at Redeemer, Dordt and Calvin Colleges, for example, why is it typically not considered a legitimate subject at the Christian high school level?

I majored in history at Redeemer College in Ancaster, Ont.; I have a double minor — philosophy and theatre arts. I am now studying at Calvin College to be a secondary school teacher. Philosophy is not a very teachable subject at the high school level. But theatre arts is teachable — at least Redeemer College's course catalogue implies that it is.

So the question remains: Why do many of us as educators and Christian high school supporters generally put acting and theatre at the bottom of the academic heap? Initially, for several legitimate reasons.

#### Budget crunch

First, there is the universal problem of budget limits. To extend drama beyond an annual extra-curricular effort

would require more teachers and more technical supplies, costumes, make-up, etc., thus requiring monies that are not available because of low enrolment, declining support or whatever.

But even if the money is available there is the shortage of trained theatre teachers to consider. (Few choose to study theatre and acting even as a teaching minor simply because there are so few job opportunities). And even if, per chance, there were enough trained theatre teachers, there remains the dilemma of cramming a theatre course or two into a curriculum that is already too spread out or too complicated.

These concerns regarding finances, qualifications and curricular upheaval are serious and worthy of careful reflection. But behind these concerns often lie some deeply engrained assumptions about acting and drama. Among those the following two assumptions must be considered misconceptions. If they remain the conventional wisdom on drama in Christian high schools, then drama will remain a low priority and many students will miss out on many potential growth experiences.

The first misconception goes like this: training high school kids how to act makes them pretend they are someone else. This is not psychologically healthy.

#### Naive assumption

This assumption is naive and it ignores the fact that we all play roles in our daily activities. For example, one can play an employee, a father or mother, a chairperson of a committee, and a neighbour, all in one day. Role-playing is a fact of life and showing students different methods of role-playing will make them more aware of how other people (fictional or real) struggle, fail, or succeed in the world around them. Within established limits, role-playing can also make clear to students that changing and developing their own roles and attitudes is a healthy, necessary process. One cannot go through life without changing one's mind or one's attitudes.

The second misconception covers another important area of drama: Acting in the Christian high school should be limited to a funny, lighthearted play every spring. After all, drama is supposed to be entertaining.

Regarding this assumption,

it is crucial to understand and accept the fact that acting is indeed role-playing. Are all roles funny? No; many roles have comic elements, but there are just as many which do not. According to Aristotle, art — that is, drama — imitates life. I think this is a worthwhile basic definition.

It would be nice if life were light-hearted and funny all the time but we all know it isn't. Of course the Christian drama teacher must constantly exercise wisdom and discretion both in teaching acting classes and in directing various plays. Selected plays must reflect a balanced variety of topics.

But while drama can be very entertaining and humorous, it can, and also should, challenge our beliefs, demand our most thoughtful reactions and cause us to identify with the suffering of others.

Perhaps the best criterion is, whatever the purpose of the play, after its production we should honestly be able to say that to some degree we benefited from it, even if it was not slapstick comedy.

Robert L. Kooy is a student at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Mich.



## 'RFA'

She leaned across the table and caught my eye. "So, are you ready to die?"

I was even more speechless than I usually am. Finally I said, "I really don't think it's

going to spread beyond the Middle East."

"Oh, so you don't want to think about it."

This friend of a friend who was visiting on Christmas Day

didn't beat around the bush.

★ ★ ★ ★

The mood of the news media at the close of 1990 could hardly be more different than it was a year ago. At the end of

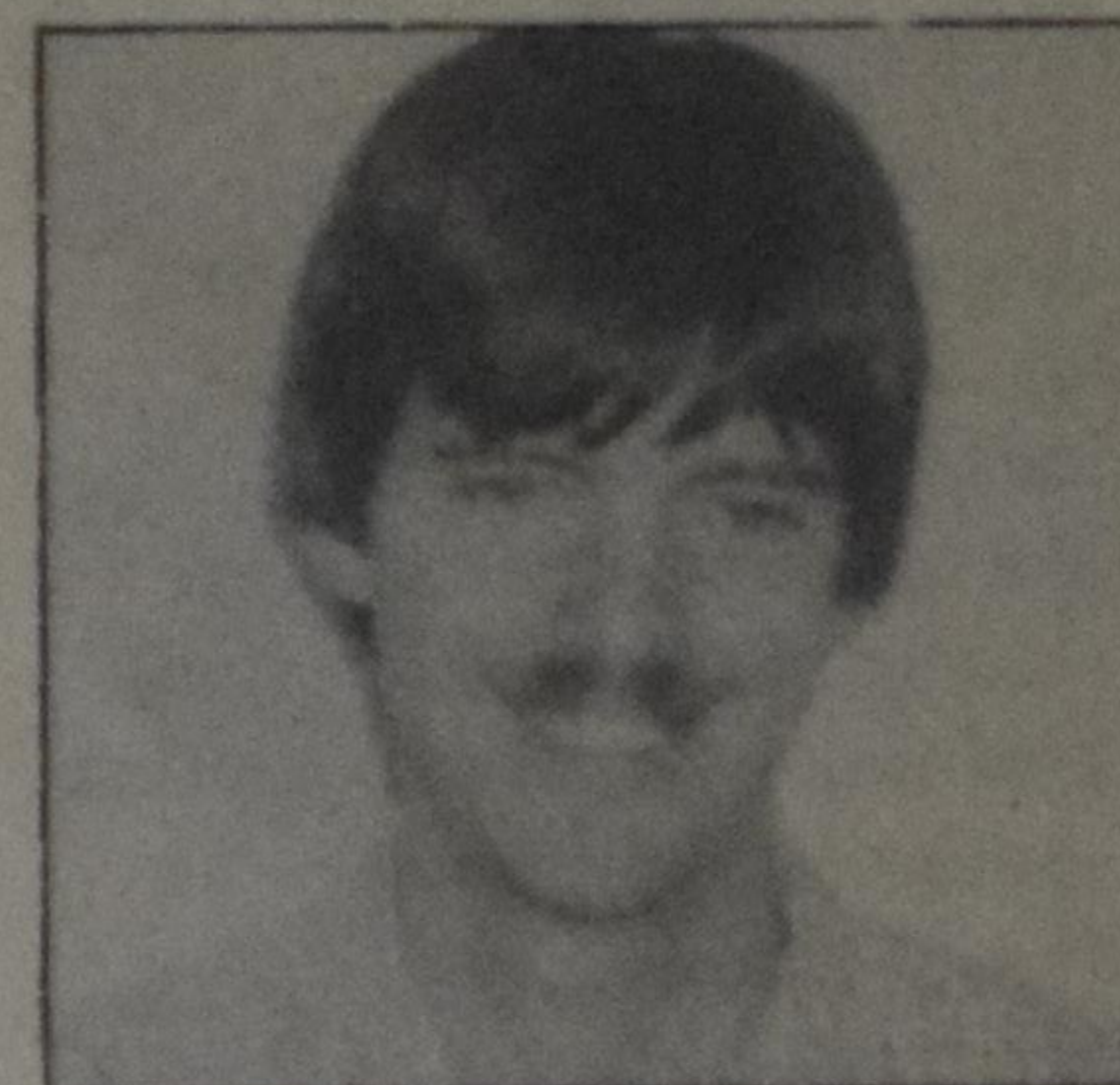
1989 the world celebrated the death of communism, assuming the dawn of a new era of co-operation and growth. Now the news is obsessed with predicting the number of Americans who will die in the Gulf, which it complements with any number of cheery questions such as: (1) When can a major economic downturn officially be called a recession?; (2) What are Canada's chances of survival?; (3) What are the Soviet Union's survival chances?; (4) How will the failure of the GATT talks affect the global economy?

One can add into this collage appropriate pinches of European anti-Semitism, the Palestinian issue, South African tribal warfare and any other local issues that suit one's taste and the picture will be fairly complete. And distressing.

### Accepting the unexpected

"So, are you ready to die?" Though I had shrugged the question off, I lay in bed later re-pondering it. It reminded me of a British friend who had spent two decades with a mission in Africa. Shortly after she and her husband had arrived, she agreed to take care of a sick infant for a few days. The days stretched to weeks; word spread that the couple from England was running a children's home. After three months they had 18 children and found themselves fully engaged in entirely unexpected work. From that point on their mission motto became RFA: Ready For Anything.

My view of the world — a view formed by the news media more than I care to admit — doesn't have a lot of RFA room. It much prefers peace and security, a few ups and downs within a context of a



Syd Hielema

stability rooted in Western liberal democracy. I prefer to live in a world that is so stable that it doesn't require one to be RFA.

My head recognizes that, in spite of many humane features, Western liberal democracy encourages a deeply self-centred individualism that paralyzes and perverts Christian witness. My heart recognizes that its desire for stability tempts it to trust in this false idol. When the news reports indicate that this false idol is crumbling (though it doesn't say it, of course, in those terms) my heart trembles while my head nods, "I told you so." Spiritual schizophrenia sets in.

A continuation of the dramatic ups and downs of the past 12 months will demand RFA room. Various media analysts try to prepare their readers for anything by describing the possible scenarios that may emerge in the future. It seems to me that the opening of Psalm 46 provides the only foundation upon which one can build an RFA spirit:

*God is our refuge and strength  
An ever present help in trouble  
Therefore we will not fear  
Though the earth give way.*

*Syd Hielema studies at the Toronto School of Theology.*



Linking spirituality, vision and service (4)

## Spirituality and social action

Aileen Van Ginkel

Getting involved in social and political action — whether locally or on a provincial, national or global level — does not necessarily require a deep-rooted spirituality. After all, many who hold to secular humanist values do admirable things for their community or nation.

But unless such involvement is fed by a sense of hopefulness, there is little to prevent despair from overtaking anyone's best intentions. We see little evidence, after all, that human beings are actually becoming better persons. The busiest activist has to admit that brokenness and death have not been eliminated and likely never will be. So why keep up all the hard work?

A healthy spirituality, fed by continual efforts to deepen one's relationship to God, can help to see, to hear and to do. We can better recognize the hurts that are all around us — those right under our nose, as well as those that are nation- or planet-wide.

### Christ-motivated action never a dead-end

Other people's needs will not only be easier for us to see, the answers to those needs will also be more evident. Whether it be listening to someone who needs to unload some emotional stress, or offering someone a decent meal and a warm place to sleep, or writing a letter to an MP to voice concern about abortion, or mounting a local campaign to reduce the amount of pollution in the air, we will be able to hear from the Christ who lives within us how we should bring healing and reconciliation in all of creation.

Our spirituality provides us with a vision for how our actions fit in with God's will. Through prayer, discussions with others, and a thorough understanding of the Scriptures, we can begin to understand what God calls us to do as his light-bearers in a world where the darkness of sin can at times seem overwhelming.

Knowing that I belong to God (no matter what), being able to communicate with him in prayer, rejoicing in his gracious acts, and unburdening my own sins by handing them

over to him, allows me to freely explore the meaning of God's grace for all areas of life.

Because I know that God cares for all people on earth, can I do any less? Because I know that God created this world and has claimed it back from Satan through his own Son's blood, can I turn my back on human suffering and the groaning of creation?

Bearing light, bringing a healing hand, proclaiming God's call for justice, restoring what has been broken by sin — all these are tasks that we can undertake in joy and hope. We know that God has already conquered sin and death; it doesn't depend on us. We know that the new heaven and new earth are at hand, no matter what we do or don't do.

### No place for despair

Our tears ought never to come out of despair that we'll never achieve our goals. Rather, they ought to come out of hearts that echo with the souls under the altar, "How long, Lord, how long?" Come back soon, Lord — Maranatha!

Seeing ourselves and the world around us through God's eyes, we are deeply aware of sin and darkness. But God won't let that overcome us. He rivets our attention on the cross and the empty grave. He blinds us with the light of his grace and mercy.

Social and political involvement, just like anything we're called to do as workers in God's Kingdom, becomes shallow and pointless if it does not come out of an ever-deepening spirituality. Unless we feel ourselves to be fed from the tips of our toes to the tops of our heads from the River of Life, we will wither and dry up.

We need to remind ourselves sometimes of what seems, in some ways, to be so self-evident. We can't begrudge time with God, even when we're itching to get on with the day's business. Rather than fight off the urge to reflect and meditate, or to pray or read God's Word, let's give in to it — as much as as often as we can!

*Aileen Van Ginkel co-chairs the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada's Social Action Commission.*

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## Letters

### Schools can solve their own labour problems

"In and Around the Workplace," the column by Mr. Ed Vanderkloet often makes for interesting reading. His keen insight into labour relations helps us understand how employers and employees should deal with one another from a Christian perspective. Mr. Vanderkloet's column "Human Rights in the Christian School" (C.C. Dec. 14, 1990) was another illustration of his position.

Although generally not disagreeing with the outlined principles, I do question the "vehicle" which was used to discuss the matter at hand.

First, unless the referred-to board members of the three Christian schools mentioned in the column shared their legitimate concern with the Ontario Alliance of Christian School Societies, I wonder why they contacted the CLAC. The OACSS does have ways and means at its disposal to assist school boards with matters relating to teacher conduct from an employer's perspective. (As does OCSTA for teachers!)

Secondly, as a member of the Ontario Christian School Teacher's Association, I do not

quite understand the role of the CLAC in matters of labour relations in the Christian school system. Publishing concerns and commenting on them the way Mr. Vanderkloet does begs the question if my executive director, Mr. H. Hultink, has asked for assistance....

Although it is far from me to try to muzzle freedom of expression, it is my considered opinion, unless and until the membership of OCSTA decides to become associated with the CLAC in an official capacity, that employer-employee concerns in OACSS member schools should be dealt with by the appropriate institutions in order to avoid confusion as to who represents whom. This, by the way, does not mean that either one should not make use of Mr. Vanderkloet's considerable expertise in case of labour conflict.

Arie J. Vanderstoel  
Drayton, Ont.

#### Ed Vanderkloet's response:

I appreciate Arie Vanderstoel's concern about the use of the proper "vehicle"

and I share his opinion. In the cases I mentioned I was contacted by individual board members (in one case, a member of the educational committee) who simply sought

advice because they were at odds with their fellow board members. Also, they consulted me personally, not as a CLAC representative. Finally, I used these examples only to

illustrate my point that the authority in the workplace should never intrude into the realm of parental responsibility.



Photo: David Van Dyke

### Peter and Marja are



#### Dear P & M:

I work as a secretary/bookkeeper in a large business. My boss, a Christian who owns the company, regularly puts money into the wrong accounts for his own tax advantage. He cheerfully says that now there's more money to give to the church. Sometimes he takes cash and doesn't declare it. I know he is a large donor to a local Christian school, but sometimes I feel that I should report him to the tax office. However, I don't want to lose my job.

#### Dear Unwilling Accomplice:

Your letter makes Christian employers aware that their business practices have a great effect on their employees. In this instance, your boss has created a moral crisis for you that spoils each work-day.

Fact: Your boss is stealing and his behaviour is criminal. Fact: Extra money gained illegally will not bless the Kingdom of God and is not a blessing to you. Fact: Your own integrity is also at stake as long as you know but do nothing. In the eyes of the law you may be seen as an accomplice. Fact: You really want this job and would hate to lose it.

Your options are to stay silent, to report him, or to speak to him directly. By staying silent you will lose self-respect and be morally agitated every day. Reporting him to Revenue Canada may cause you to lose your job and may result in tax evasion charges against your boss.

We suggest that you take the third option and speak boldly to him about this matter as one Christian to another. Tell him that you can't respect him and work for him if he can't run his business honestly. Tell him that you really want your job but that you are trusting God to either change your present work environment or provide you with another job. Warn him that you are concerned enough to contact Revenue Canada or the Internal Revenue Services (whichever applies) if changes don't take place.

You can be bold only if you have decided that you are willing to pay the price and possibly lose your job because of your loyalty to Jesus. To paraphrase Luke 9:25: What good is it for you to keep your job, and yet lose or forfeit your very self?

It is to be hoped that your willingness to risk your job will deeply touch your boss and help him to change his ways. One thing is certain: however it turns out, the Lord will provide for you and bless the stand you take for him.

#### Dear P & M:

With interest I always read your advice in Calvinist Contact and I must say that I generally agree with your replies. However, the answer given to "Uneven Split" (Sept. 14, 1990) was quite inadequate. Don't you feel that this couple needs counselling badly? There is more than just an uneven split in their family visits. In fact, there is a lack of communication!

I'm just back from a visit to Holland and experienced that you have to set dates from day to day as you go.

May I also draw your attention to the funny headings you often write with the answers. For example, I've heard of a "Banana Split," but never an "Uneven Split." Other examples come to mind like, "Dear Zero Population Growth" and "Dear Don't Want to Drift Apart," etc. Just "Dear Friends" will do. Compare Ann Landers.

#### Dear Friend:

Our September 14 column dealt with a woman who was angry and hurt because her husband found excuses to spend two-and-a-half weeks of their three week vacation with his side of the family. We agree with you that this uneven split is a symptom of a much deeper problem and that we should have pointed this out and encouraged them to seek Christian counselling. Nevertheless, we hope that you appreciated the support we gave her to be more assertive with her husband.

With a carefully chosen word or phrase we try to sum up the main issue at hand. It helps distinguish one answer from the next and provides an identity for each letter. Without this creative device we would have a difficult time filing and locating previous columns. The titles are designed to catch your interest and trigger a general memory of what a reader wrote.

We hope it works that way for our readers. In the last four months we've dealt with a couple who were "Madly In Love," a church member who "Saw It In the Paper," some parents who "Pictured Things Differently," and a daughter who was "There When Needed" for her widowed father. We also heard from a man who favoured "Zero Population Growth," a party-goer who caught himself "Laughing Uneasily," a young teenaged couple who struggled with "Mutual Desire," an adolescent who was just "Hitting Puberty" and a woman who always found herself "In the Passenger's Seat." Then there were the wrenching letters from a divorcee who recently "Remarried" and a woman who wrestles with sexual guilt and walks a self-described "Lonely Road."

Finally there is today's letter from a "Friend" who cared enough to write and whose input we value.

#### Write to:

Dear P & M  
c/o Calvinist Contact  
4-261 Martindale Rd.  
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of: Sam Da Silva, Ineke Brouwer-Parlevliet, Tom Zeyl, Marian Van Til.

### Don't talk when your mouth's full

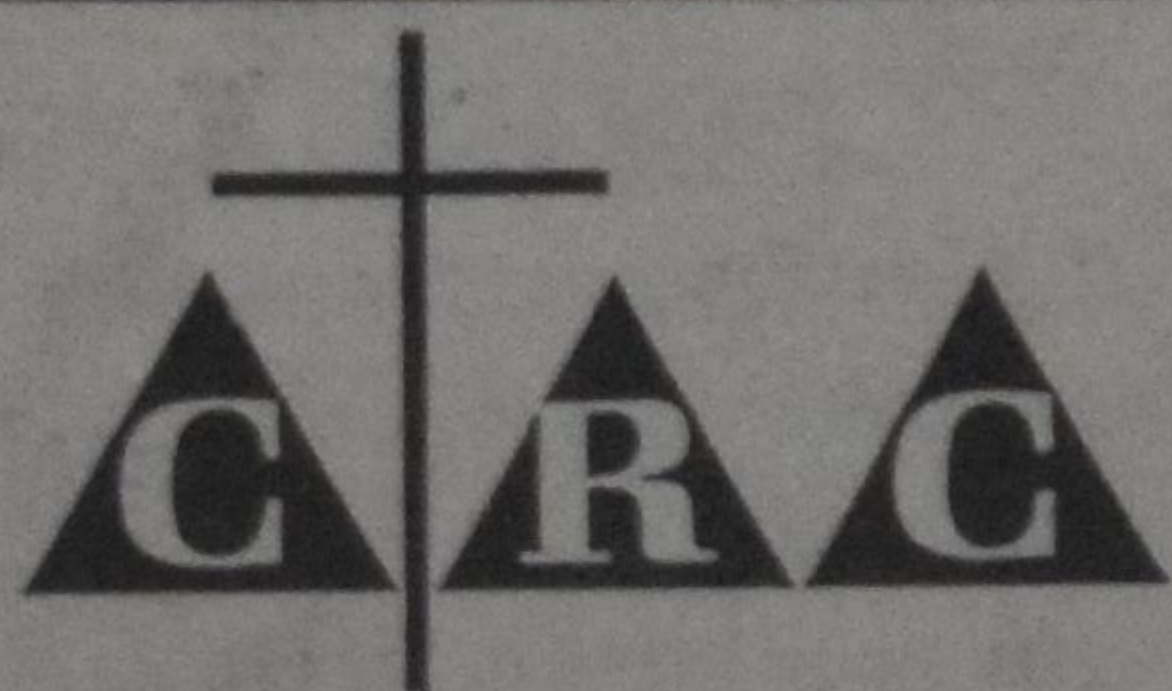
I was astonished at Adrian Peetoom's column (Nov. 30) about his wife's cooking. For someone who in the past has seemed fairly sensitive to women and discrimination against them, this time he really

came off as a chauvinist (his true colours, or a momentary lapse?).

What's to stop you, Adrian, from doing some of the cooking, particularly if you don't like the way your wife does it? Why is it her duty to feed and serve you? Perhaps her talents lie in other areas. If so, you should be doing the cooking. If not, you should (pardon the expression) keep your mouth shut — particularly when it's full of your wife's good food.

Mary Lou Varga  
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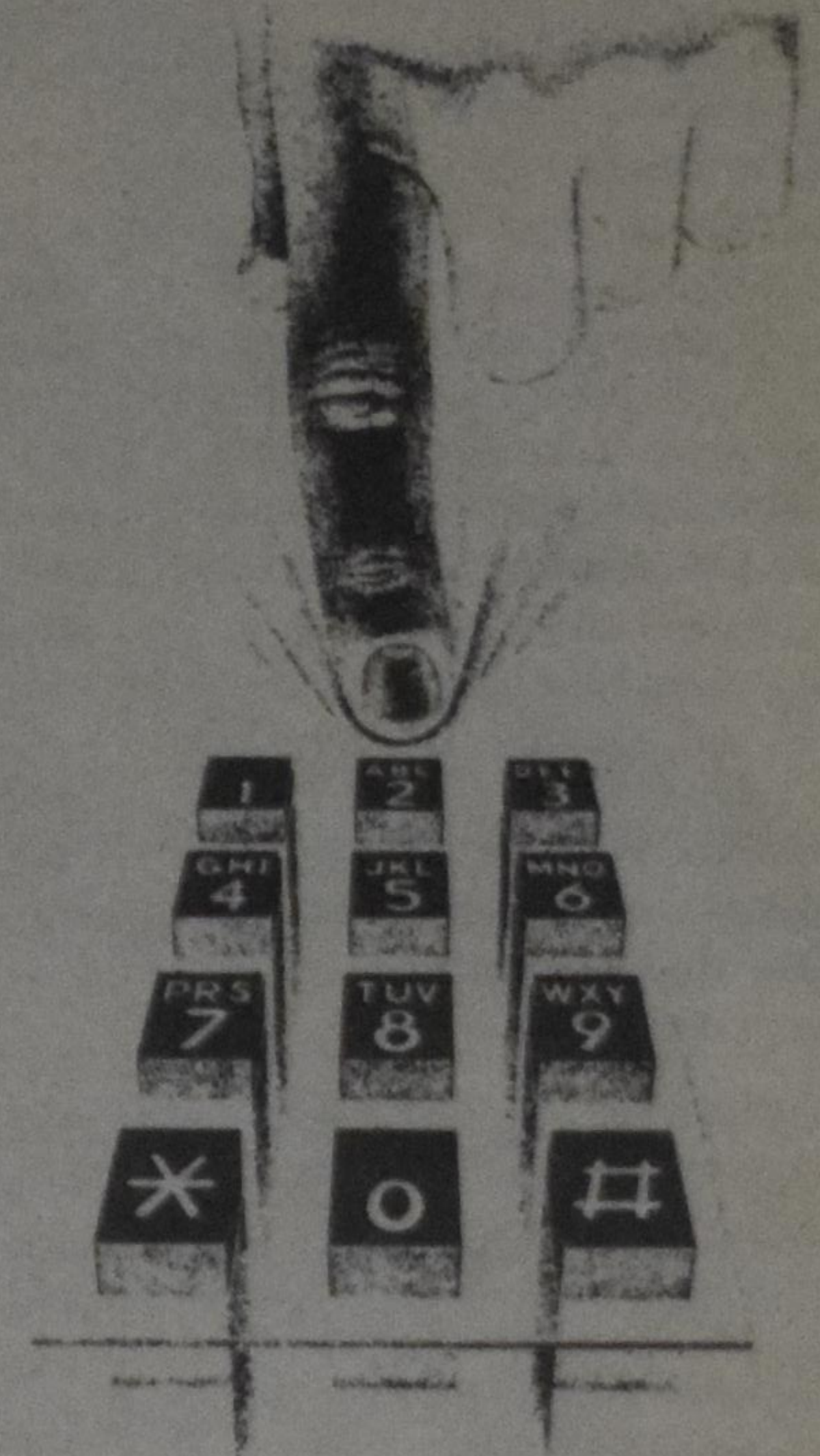
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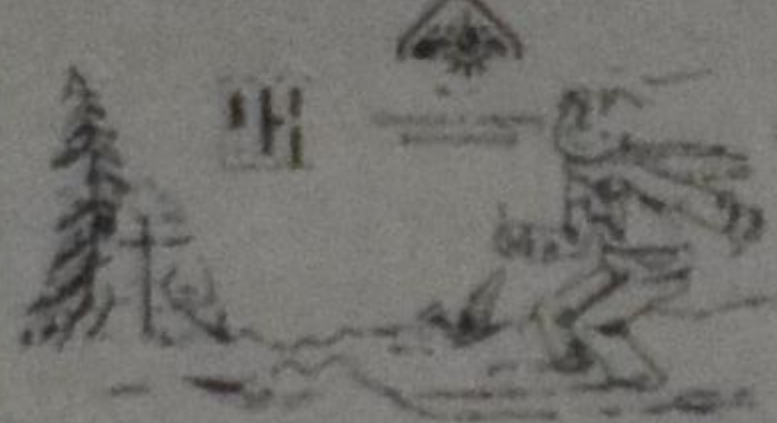
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St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1 Phone (416) 682-8311 Fax (416) 682-8313</p>	<p><b>KROEZEN:</b></p> <p>"Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I say rejoice!"</p> <p>We, Henry and Laura, rejoice in the birth of another little girl.</p> <p><b>JENNIFER EMILY</b></p> <p>was born Nov. 30, 1990, weighing 8 lbs. 14 oz. A new sister for Stephanie.</p> <p>Proud grandparents are Gerrit and Edith Lokhorst of Belmont, Ont., and Gerrit and Aly Kroezen of Acton, Ont.</p> <p>Home address: 99 Kingham Rd., Acton, ON L7J 1S3</p> <p><b>PASMA-VAN ELBURG:</b></p> <p>Tim and Joanne thank God for the safe arrival of our third son,</p> <p><b>DANIEL JAMES</b></p> <p>born Dec. 12, 1990, weighing 7 lbs. 2 oz. A brother for Christopher and Robert. Twelfth grandchild for Johan and Maatje Van Elburg of Thunder Bay, Ont., and 25th grandchild for George and Alice Pasma of London, Ont.</p> <p>Home address: 1864 Royal Cresc., London, ON N5W 2A8</p> <p><b>SIKKENS-HORINGA:</b></p> <p>Luke and Martha thank God for the safe arrival of another daughter,</p> <p><b>HOLLY JUSTINE</b></p> <p>born Dec. 17, 1990, weighing in at 8 lbs. 1 oz. A sister for Elizabeth, age 3 and Kurt, age 1. Proud grandparents for the 22nd time are Koert (deceased Dec. 29, 1990) and Bertha Sikkens of Fenwick, Ont., and for the 12th time Hank and Betty Horinga of Woodstock, Ont.; 31st great-grandchild for Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Horinga of Woodstock, Ont., and another great-grandchild for Mrs. J. Kamps of Borger, the Neth.</p> <p>We are thankful to the Lord that Opa was able to see and hold his latest grandchild, Holly, before passing away.</p> <p>Home address: 25 Emmett Ave., Fonthill, ON L0S 1E0</p> <p><b>VAN DYK:</b></p> <p>With praise and thanksgiving to God, we, John and Elizabeth Van Dyk, joyfully announce the birth of our first child, a daughter,</p> <p><b>STEPHANIE ELIZABETH</b></p> <p>on Nov. 19, 1990, weighing 7 lbs. 6 oz.</p> <p>Another precious grandchild for Chris and Ali Troelstra of Terrace, B.C., Marten and Tina Van Dyk of Whitby, Ont., and the late Elizabeth Van Dyk (1982).</p> <p>Home address: 114 Elliott St., Cambridge, ON N1R 2J8</p> <p><b>VEENBAAS:</b></p> <p>With thanks to God, we, Sid and Winny Veenbaas (nee Riewald) are happy to announce the birth of our third child, a son,</p> <p><b>MATTHEW PETER</b></p> <p>born Dec. 8, 1990. A little brother for Justin and Jenna.</p> <p>Matthew is the 15th grandchild for Popke and Jennie Veenbaas of Abbotsford, B.C., and the 10th grandchild for Cor and Janny Riewald of Burlington, Ont.</p> <p>Another great-grandchild for Pake Haisma of the Neth.</p> <p>Home address: P.O. Box 98, Matsqui, BC V0X 1S0</p>	<p>Liessens (Fr.)      Smithers (B.C.)</p> <p>1951      January 18      1991</p> <p>We are happy to announce the 40th wedding anniversary of,</p> <p><b>THEO and ANNA BANDSTRA</b> (nee Douma)</p> <p>Their years together bear witness to God's promise "in all your ways acknowledge him and he will make your paths straight" (Prov. 3:6). We pray that your marriage continues to experience the riches of God's grace.</p> <p>Congratulations and best wishes from all of us:</p> <p>John &amp; Ann Bandstra — Terrace, B.C.</p> <p>Bryan, David, Derek</p> <p>Doug &amp; Evelyn Visser — Edmonton, Alta.</p> <p>Wendell, Janelle, Kevin</p> <p>Mark &amp; Betty Bandstra — Smithers, B.C.</p> <p>Tamara, Theo, Darcy</p> <p>Nick &amp; Diane Benjamins — Ingersoll, Ont.</p> <p>Lisa, Kristin</p> <p>Glenn &amp; Barb Bandstra — Smithers, B.C.</p> <p>Amy</p> <p>An open house will be held at the Smithers Aspen Inn Banquet room, Jan. 18, 1991, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.</p> <p>Home address: Box 188, Highway 16 West, Smithers, BC V0J 2N0</p>	<p>"... rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer..." (Romans 12:12).</p> <p><b>SHIRLEY and MICHAEL KINGMA</b> (Jeltje Dykstra and Minne)</p> <p>With thanksgiving and praise, we celebrate the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents on Jan. 4, 1991. From all of your children and grandchildren, thank you for your endless love, and may God richly bless your future.</p> <p>Kathy &amp; Kenn</p> <p>James, Julie, Carolynn</p> <p>Jennie &amp; Graham</p> <p>Lisa, Eddie</p> <p>John &amp; Bernice</p> <p>Ryan, Angela, Janna, John</p> <p>Ed &amp; Maria</p> <p>Jeffrey, Michael, Jennifer</p> <p>Maryanne &amp; Bill</p> <p>Ray &amp; Benita</p> <p>Mike &amp; Karen</p> <p>Michael, Blake, Daniel, Kayla</p> <p>Everyone is welcome to join us for coffee after the morning church service at First Chr. Ref. Church in Vancouver, on Dec. 30, 1990.</p> <p>Home address: 6151 Bellflower Dr., Richmond, BC V7C 2H7</p>
<p><b>Classifieds continued.</b></p>			
<p><b>Anniversaries</b></p>			
			
<p><i>Congratulations to Alex and Wilma Van Rooyen who will celebrate, D.V., their 60th wedding anniversary on Jan. 14, 1991.</i></p>			
<p>Zevenhuizen (ZH)      Aylmer, Ont.</p> <p>1931      January 14      1991</p> <p>With praise and thanksgiving to our heavenly Father, we observe the 60th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents,</p> <p><b>ALEX and WILMA VAN ROOYEN</b></p> <p>May the Lord continue to bless and keep you.</p> <p>Congratulations from:</p> <p>William (deceased) &amp; Ann Van Rooyen — Charlottetown, P.E.I.</p> <p>Anthony &amp; Marie Van Rooyen — Lynden, Wash.</p> <p>Lena &amp; Homer Vander Vecht — Ingersoll, Ont.</p> <p>Alex Van Rooyen — Medicine Hat, Alta.</p> <p>Also 18 grandchildren and 21 great-grandchildren.</p> <p>Home address: 110 Caverly Rd., Apt. 8, Aylmer, ON N5H 2P4</p>			
<p><b>Obituaries</b></p> <p>"Let not your heart be troubled, believe in God, and so in me. Where you now tread, I too have trod, be still and know that I am God."</p> <p>On Saturday, Dec. 15, 1990, the Lord called home, at the age of 37, our dearly loved</p> <p><b>JANET GAZENDAM</b></p> <p>daughter of the late Piet Weima and Hanna Bakker (Weima) and husband Eelke.</p> <p>Sister of:</p> <p>Bill Weima and wife Bonnie</p> <p>John Weima and wife Anna</p> <p>May the Lord comfort and strengthen her husband Nick and children, Peter, Nicole and Jonathan.</p> <p>Funeral service was held Dec. 18, 1990, in Westside Fellowship CRC, Kingston, Ont.</p>			
<p><b>Obituaries</b></p> <p>"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matth. 11:28).</p> <p>On Dec. 16, 1990, the Lord called home our dear husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather,</p> <p><b>GERRIT TOORNSTRA</b></p> <p>at the age of 76 years.</p> <p>Lovingly remembered by his dear wife, Ann.</p> <p>Dear father of:</p> <p>Clarence &amp; Mary Toornstra — Edmonton, Alta.</p> <p>Jacob Toornstra — Edmonton, Alta.</p> <p>Peter &amp; Joanne Toornstra — Edmonton, Alta.</p> <p>Bert &amp; Janet Toornstra — Sherwood Park, Alta.</p> <p>Jack &amp; Janet Toornstra — Edmonton, Alta.</p> <p>Sita &amp; Jack Dost — Calgary, Alta.</p> <p>Winnie &amp; Tim Visscher — Edmonton, Alta.</p> <p>Grace &amp; Ken Craig — Sherwood Park, Alta.</p> <p>Dear Opa of 26 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.</p> <p>The funeral service took place Thursday, Dec. 20, 1990, at the Maranatha Chr. Ref. Church, Edmonton, Alta., the Rev. Nick Cornelisse officiating.</p> <p>Correspondence address: 5510-118 Ave., Apt. #102, Edmonton, AB T5W 1C7</p>			



Classified

Obituaries	Obituaries	Obituaries	Help Wanted	Real Estate
<p>Westdorp the Neth. May 28, 1918 Dec. 29, 1990 "For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep" (1 Thess. 4:14). On Saturday, Dec. 29, 1990, the Lord called to his eternal home our dear husband, father and opa,</p> <p><b>KOERT SIKKENS</b></p> <p>at the age of 72 years. Lovingly remembered by his wife of 42 years, Alberta Sikkens (nee Kamps) and his children: John &amp; Ingrid Sikkens — Welland-port, Ont. Jonathan, Roberta, Annalise, Albert, Krista Dianne &amp; Paul Terris — Hamilton, Ont. Jennifer, Christine Ann &amp; John Kuchyt — Welland-port, Ont. Shanon, Christopher Luke &amp; Martha Sikkens — Fonthill, Ont. Elizabeth, Kurt, Holly Alice &amp; Brian Heaslip — Welland-port, Ont. Ryan, Benji, Jackie Joanne &amp; Louis Dam — Fenwick, Ont. Matthew, David, Jeffrey Janet &amp; Ian Seright — Vancouver, B.C. Margaret Sikkens &amp; Dennis Malchow — Vancouver, B.C. Betty &amp; Kevin Twomey — Fenwick, Ont. Jessica, Sarah Irene &amp; Vince Vallee — Welland-port, Ont. Nikki, Mark Debbie &amp; Hank Nauta — Fenwick, Ont. Sonya &amp; Bari Altena — Hamilton, Ont.</p> <p>Funeral service was held at Bethany Chr. Ref. Church of Fenwick, Ont., on Jan. 2, 1991, with Rev. Eshuis officiating. Correspondence address: 1177 Sunset Dr., Fenwick, ON L0S 1C0</p> <p>Home with the Lord. In his infinite wisdom, the Lord took to himself, our precious and beloved son and brother,</p> <p><b>ARTHUR JAMES (Art) VANDERSTELT</b></p> <p>who died Dec. 18, 1990, at the age of 32. Survived by his parents: Tony and Jenny Vanderstelt. Brother of: Jennifer &amp; Wilf Hogeveen — Brantford Wendy &amp; Randy Colyn — Smithville Lori Vanderstelt — Brantford Debbie Vanderstelt — at home Funeral service was held Dec. 20, 1990, at 11 a.m. at First Chr. Ref. Church, Brantford, Ont. Rev. L. Batterink and Rev. Peter Van Egmond (uncle) officiating. Phil. 4:7. Correspondence address: 14 Harris Ave., Brantford, ON N3R 2E9</p>	<p>On Dec. 18, 1990, the Lord took home our dear grandson, nephew and cousin,</p> <p><b>ART VANDERSTELT</b></p> <p>at the age of 32, in full assurance of faith. Beloved son of: Tony and Jenny VanderStelt. Brother of: Jennifer &amp; Wilf Wendy &amp; Randy Jenelle, Tarin Lori Debbie "We rejoice in the hope of the glory of God" (Rom. 5:2b). Grandma Wilma VanderStelt Rita &amp; Peter DeGelder Jenny &amp; Peter VanEgmond Bob &amp; Betty VanderStelt Arie &amp; Tini VanderStelt Wilma &amp; John Mantel and cousins Correspondence address: 14 Harris Ave., Brantford, ON N3R 2E9-</p> <p>On Jan. 1, 1991, suddenly, the Lord called to his eternal home our father, grandfather and great-grandfather,</p> <p><b>HENDRIK (Henry) VELDBOOM</b></p> <p>in his 79th year. He is remembered by: John &amp; Beatrix Veldboom — Hamilton, Ont. Terry &amp; Yvonne (Kirsten), Anita &amp; Jerry (Jessica), Karen, Henry Jantina &amp; John DeVries — Hamilton, Ont. Mark, Rochelle, Timothy, Angela Rita &amp; Len Bangma — Peterborough, Ont. Jantina, Paul, Kristina, Albert, Jason A funeral service was held in Hamilton on Jan. 4, 1991, Rev. John Zantigh officiating. Interment at Rosefawn Memorial Gardens in Brockville, Ont. Correspondence address: J. Veldboom, 378 East 13th St., Hamilton, ON L9A 4A1</p> <p>Eén jaar na het overlijden van zijn zuster en zijn moeder heeft God, op 18 december, 1990, thuisgehaald onze geliefde zoon, broer en zwager</p> <p><b>GERHARD WESTERMAN</b></p> <p>op de leeftijd van 62 jaar.</p> <p>Hoofddorp, Nederland.</p> <p>Wij wensen Bep en de kinderen, Bea en Stefan, heel veel sterkte toe. "Daar zijn geen grenzen aan Jezus' macht, voor elk die wond'ren van Hem verwacht. Ja, wie Hij aanraakt, aanvaardt Zijn kracht, er zijn geen grenzen aan Jezus' macht." S.G. Westerman — Brampton, Ont. Jan Klingenberg — Ingersoll, Ont. Alie Westerman — Amsterdam, Nederland Jack &amp; Lies Klooster — Kitchener, Ont. Correspondentie adres: Covenant Tower #1007, 7900 McLaughlin Rd. S., R.R.10, Brampton, ON L6V 3N2</p>	<p>Wagenborgen, Gron. the Netherlands Jan. 28, 1907 Edmonton, Alta. Canada Dec. 9, 1990</p> <p><b>ENGEL ZOMERMAN</b></p> <p>Beloved husband of Biny Zomerman van der Hoek. "Hij kan en wil en zal in nood, zelfs bij het naad'ren van den dood, volkomen uitkomst geven" (Psalm 68). Dear father and grandfather of: Truus &amp; Rienko Haan Cathy &amp; Arie (Rika, Hannah, Nico), Annette &amp; Robert (Peter), Fred &amp; Wilma (Nicole, Renee), Elmer, Laura Jerry &amp; Margaret Zomerman John &amp; Bev (Derek), Andrew, Angeline, James Tina &amp; Stan Bootsma Ed &amp; Bernice (Christine, Joel, Vanessa), Rick &amp; Alison, Howard &amp; Rose, Leonard and 10 great-grandchildren. Home address: #512 St. Andrew's Centre, 12720 - 111 Ave., Edmonton, AB T5M 3X3</p>	<p>Reliable salesman wanted in the wholesale florist business, starting immediately. Benefit package available. Contact Clarence Vanderhout Ltd., (416) 643-1982.</p> <p><b>Church news can be found on page 19.</b></p>	<p><b>Bi-level semi-dwelling St. Catharines, Ont. \$126,900</b></p> <p>An affordable new home for you! Brick and vinyl bi-level, series 800 doors, large eat-in kitchen, oak cabinets and railings, side entrance into lower level, fully landscaped, and many more features. Don't pass this by! To inspect and purchase, call G.W. Abrahams Realty Ltd., broker - Linda Lammers, Sales Representative (416) 688-0037 or (416) 688-2422, page 130.</p>
			<p><b>Teachers</b></p>	<p><b>Teachers</b></p>
		<p><b>Teachers</b></p> <p><b>BARRIE, Ont.: Timothy Christian School</b>, 49 Ferris Lane, Barrie, ON L4M 2Y1 needs a <b>Grade 3</b> teacher, starting April 1, 1991. Please send resume and application, c/o Mr. H.K. Bergsma, Principal. Tel.: (705) 726-6621.</p> <p><b>CLINTON, Ont.: Clinton and District Chr. School</b> will have a vacancy starting Sept. 1991. Grade level to be determined. If you are interested in a teaching position with our school, please send your application and resume to: Mr. R. Schuurman, Principal, Clinton and District Christian School, P.O. Box 658, Clinton, ON N0M 1L0. Tel. (519) 482-7851.</p> <p><b>PARKSVILLE, B.C.:</b> <b>January appointment</b> <b>Parksville Christian School</b> on Vancouver Island needs a full-time teacher for <b>Grades 5/6</b> as of Jan. 1, 1991. We are looking for strength in French with Science/Math teaching abilities. Please send resume as soon as possible to: Parksville Christian School, 550 Pym St., Parksville, BC V9P 1B6. Tel.: (604) 248-8355.</p> <p><b>VANCOUVER, B.C.:</b> <b>Vancouver Christian School</b>, a denominationally diverse community, currently offering Kindergarten through Grade 7, is planning to expand to junior high school beginning with Grade 8 in the 1991/92 school year. Persons with a strong <b>Math/Science</b> background in education with interest in teaching <b>P.E., Art or Computer</b>, are invited to apply. Please direct enquiries to: Ellen Visser, Junior High Program Co-ordinator, Vancouver Christian School, 3496 Mons Dr., Vancouver, BC V5M 3E6</p>		<p><b>TEACHER / ADMINISTRATOR</b> <i>(assistant principal)</i></p> <p>The <b>Edmonton Society for Christian Education</b> is seeking an Assistant Principal for their <b>high school</b>, one of a four school, K-to-12 system. With a student body of 175, a staff of 15, and stepping into its 25th year, the <b>high school</b> offers full general and academic programs which emphasizes Christian perspective and action.</p> <p>a. <b>Responsibilities:</b> The Assistant Principal's responsibilities (2/5 time) are characterized by shared leadership, which currently gives special but not exclusive emphasis to curriculum and instructional supervision and teacher evaluation. The position's teaching assignment (3/5 time) will be based on training and previous teaching success in secondary science and/or social studies.</p> <p>b. <b>Training:</b> undergraduate, graduate, or specialist training in one of, or in a combination of curriculum and/or administration: <i>and</i> teaching experience and eligibility for an Alberta Teaching Certificate.</p> <p>c. <b>Letters of Reference</b> from each of the following: current supervisor, a teaching colleague, an administrative colleague.</p> <p><i>Apply to:</i> <b>J. Greidanus, Convenor</b> <b>Assistant Principal Search Committee</b> <b>16 Valleyview Point, Edmonton, AB T5R 5T4</b></p> <p><i>Deadline:</i> applications received by January 30, 1991.</p> <p><i>For job description and other details:</i> <b>1-403-454-0791 (school)</b></p> 
<p><b>For Sale</b></p> <p><b>For sale, Florida:</b> Lovely two-bedroom retirement home, fully furnished, "Dutch-clean" with carport and Florida room, spacious lot. Asking \$48,500 (U.S.) Contact Marion Scaramuzzo rlr., 1-800-289-2200 or (407) 574-0000 or John Tjoelker (416) 277-0576.</p> <p>For sale: 1987 double wide mobile in a lovely Central Florida adult park. Bargain! W. DeVries, 2038 Thelma Dr., Winter Haven, Florida 33881 or 1-813-956-3021.</p>	<p><b>Help Wanted</b></p> <p><b>Estimator wanted for bidding on ICI Design Build</b></p> <p>General contract projects ranging up to 5M for established Belleville, Ont., based construction company. Preference will be given to applicants with additional skills in project management, design and drafting.</p> <p>Please forward resume in confidence to: <b>File #2555, c/o Calvinist Contact</b> <b>4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1</b></p>	<p><b>Help Wanted</b></p>		<p><b>Abbotsford Christian School</b> <b>Elementary Principal</b></p> <p>The Abbotsford Christian School Board seeks to appoint its second elementary campus principal for the 1991-92 school year (K-7; 325 students). The successful candidate must be willing to join a dynamic, rapidly expanding, interdenominational Christian School system, whose team of administrators give leadership to over 900 students in three separate campuses (see other ad).</p> <p>Applicants who are certifiable in B.C. should send application, resume and references to:</p> <p><b>Henry Contant, Principal</b> <b>Abbotsford Christian School, Elementary Campus</b> <b>Box 175, Abbotsford, BC V2S 4N8</b> <b>(604) 859-5167 or Fax: (604) 859-9995</b></p> <p><b>Teacher and help wanted ads continued ...</b></p>



# Classified

## Help Wanted

**Social service work:** Mutual Support Systems, a network of rural group homes in the Niagara Peninsula for children experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties, invites applications for the position of **Child Care Worker**. The responsibilities of this live-in position include involvement in the educational programming of the residents, scheduling daily routines, as well as planning special events, all in a family setting. In-service training provides an excellent opportunity for personal growth and skill development at role modelling positive relationships and facilitating the resident's successes. Position includes salary and benefits package. Please submit resume to Personnel Manager, Mutual Support Systems, R.R.1, Perry Rd., Wellandport, ON L0R 2J0. Telephone: (416) 899-2311.

## Help Wanted



### CRC HOME MISSIONS

is accepting applications for a position as:

### MEN'S LIFE ADMINISTRATOR and MARKETING ASSOCIATE

(Combination position)

Candidate must have:

- leadership gifts
- marketing experience
- administrative ability
- vision for evangelism
- public speaking skills

Candidate must be:

- free to travel
- involved in ministry
- member of the CRC

Receive a position description and application from:

**Dr. Alvin Vander Griend**  
2850 Kalamazoo Avenue SE  
Grand Rapids, MI 49560  
(616) 246-0764

Inquiry deadline: January 30, 1990

## For Rent

Want to rent  
a car while  
in Holland?



Jan Kalma

has the key to  
all forms of car rentals.

Will deliver car to Amsterdam  
airport if desired.

**jan kalma**

De Meer 24, 9201 EZ Drachten  
The Netherlands — Tel. (31) 5120-15199

Fax (31) 5120-32324

## Teachers



Join a dynamic, rapidly expanding, interdenominational Christian School System of over 900 students K-12 that will be operating from three separate campuses for the 1991-92 school year.

Abbotsford Christian School invites applications from teachers and principals certifiable in B.C. for the following new positions for September 1991.

**ELEMENTARY CAMPUSES (K-7)** Each campus approx. 325 students:

*Elementary Principalship*

*Primary — K, 1, 2*

*Intermediate — 7*

*Librarian — (full time)*

*French — Grades 4-7 (part time)*

*Secretary — (full time)*

**Possible Openings:**

*Vice Principalship — Grades 3/4, 5/6*

**SECONDARY CAMPUS (8 - 12)** Approximately 275 students. Possible openings in combination of:

*French*

*Science*

*Learning Assistance*

*Junior High English and Math*

Send applications, resume and references to:

**Henry Contant, Principal**  
Abbotsford Christian School  
Elementary Campus  
Box 175  
Abbotsford, BC V2S 4N8  
(604) 859-5167  
Fax: 859-9995

**Dwight Moodie, Principal**  
Abbotsford Christian School  
Secondary Campus  
Box 157  
Abbotsford, BC V2S 4N8  
(604) 859-5528  
Fax: 859-2240

## Centennial Christian School Terrace, B.C.

Centennial is a rapidly growing interdenominational school with a current enrollment of 170 students and 10 teachers. The school is planning to add **GRADE 9** in **September 1991**. Grade 8 was added in September 1990. The Lord blessed us with a class of 17 enthusiastic students and equally committed parents.

In order to plan effectively for this expansion of our program we are looking for

**experienced junior high teachers**

We would appreciate hearing from anyone interested, before Jan. 15, 1991.

Please contact for more information:

**Mr. Frank Voogd**

3608 Sparks St., Terrace, BC V8G 2A5

Phone: (604) 635-6173

## Trinity Christian School

Burlington, Ont.,

is looking for a

### TEACHING PRINCIPAL

for August 1991.

We are an interdenominational K-8 school with 154 students. Applications will be accepted until *Jan. 18, 1991*. Please send a complete resume and references to:

**SEARCH COMMITTEE**

c/o Trinity Christian School

650 Walkers Line, Burlington, ON L7N 2E7

Tel. (416) 634-3052 or J. Vanderhoek (416) 336-8032

**ATTENTION! ATTENTION! ATTENTION!**

When you fax your display or classified ads to us (particularly obituaries), please type them and check spelling **BEFORE** you transmit the text.

Thank you.

**ATTENTION! ATTENTION! ATTENTION!**

## Help Wanted

## GENERAL MANAGER

The **Neerlandia Co-op**, a rural retail located 80 mi. NW of Edmonton, with sales of \$8-9M, is looking for a General Manager. We are a diversified Co-op with feed, fertilizer, lumber and grocery departments as well as a service centre. Solid management skills are required. Salary: to reflect experience.

To apply send resume to:

**Board of Directors**

**Box 87, Neerlandia, AB, Canada T0G 1R0**  
or phone: (403) 674-5904

## DURHAM CHRISTIAN HIGH SCHOOL

is looking for a

### Director of Resource Development

to assist the school in the areas of promotion, recruitment and fundraising.

Applications for a full-time or part-time position will be considered. Job description available upon request. Resume may be sent to:

**Business Administrator**

**Durham Christian High School**

**R.R.#1, Bowmanville, ON L1C 3K2**

**Tel: (416) 623-5940 (school)**

**or (416) 623-5533 (home)**

**Deadline: February 15, 1990.**



## THE KING'S COLLEGE A Christian Liberal Arts College

The King's College, a Christian liberal arts college offering 3-year B.A. and B.Sc. degrees, is inviting applications from women or men for a full-time tenure track vacancy in

### ENGLISH

The position involves teaching introductory English literature and eventually American or 18th century English literature. Additional competence in medieval pre-Victorian literature and composition would be valuable. A Ph.D. is required as well as agreement with the College's Christian Statement of Faith. *Effective July 1, 1991*. Send application letter, curriculum vitae, copies of transcripts and three letters of reference to:

**Dr. S. Keith Ward, Vice President Academic**

**The King's College, Dept. 601, 10766 - 97 St.**

**Edmonton, AB T5H 2M1**

**(403) 428-0727**

The King's College is an equal opportunity employer, but in accordance with Canadian Employment and Immigration regulations, this advertisement is directed to Canadian citizens and permanent residents.

## Miscellaneous

### FRED HEEREMA, B.A., L.L.B.

Barrister, Solicitor & Notary Public  
an associate of the

### LABOUR RELATIONS & EMPLOYMENT LAW GROUP

AT

**MILLER THOMSON**

Barristers & Solicitors

Box 27, 20 Queen Street W.  
Toronto, Ontario, M5H 3S1  
Telephone: (416) 595-8500  
Fax: (416) 595-8695

625 Cochrane Dr., Ste. 800  
Markham, Ontario, L3R 9R9  
Telephone: (416) 475-8060  
Fax: (416) 475-8104

Direct Line: 595-8596

Send your questions to Peter and Marja  
c/o Calvinist Contact  
4-261 Martindale Rd.  
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

— Complete confidentiality is assured —



Events/ Human Interest

Soviet pen pal project launched

GARDEN GROVE, CA (ASSIST) — A unique pen pal project between North American and Soviet Christians has been launched by ASSIST (Aid to Special Saints in Strategic Times). Called "The Russian Connection," North American Christians will now be able to write directly to a believer in the Soviet Union, provide Bibles and Christian literature and receive letters back.

The project has been announced by British journalist Dan Wooding, founder and international director of ASSIST, which has offices in the United States, Canada, Australia and the United Kingdom. "This is an exciting opportunity for believers here to have a profound and meaningful relationship with a Soviet Christian," said Wooding, who founded ASSIST in 1988.

"We have been receiving letters from all over the Soviet Union asking for pen pals and literature. A pilot program in Canada has already been very successful, with Canadian Christians involved in writing and sending literature to the Soviet Union. Now we want American Christians to also have this opportunity."

Those who request a Soviet pen pal will receive a copy of a letter with the English translation, plus a list of organizations that can supply Bibles and other literature in the Russian language. "This is a tangible spin-off from glasnost," added Wooding.

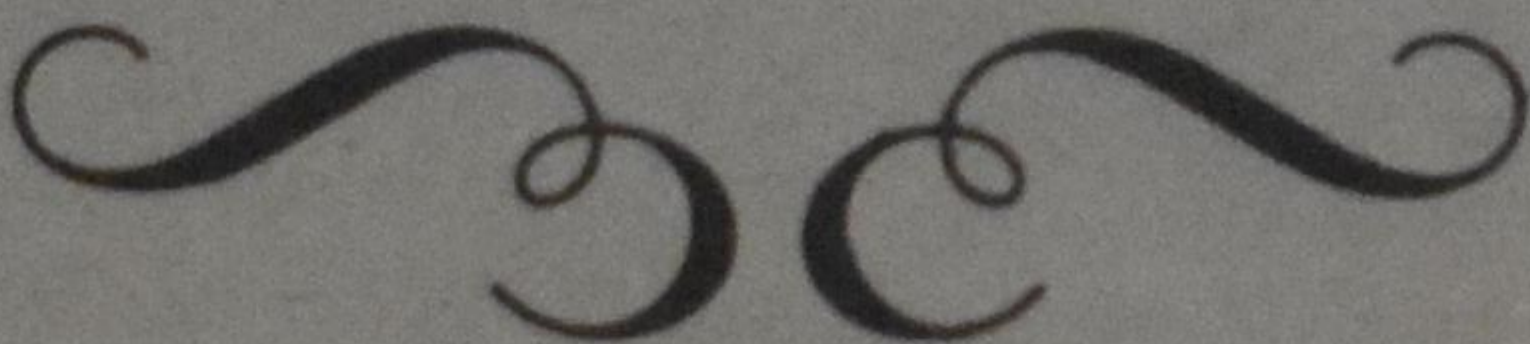
"The fact that we can become involved with a Soviet believer in a one-to-one way is quite remarkable."

Heading up "The Russian Connection" is the Rev. Barry Taylor, pastor of Lake Arrowhead Christian Fellowship in Lake Arrowhead, California. Taylor, author of the book, *Singing in the Dark*, speaks fluent Russian and has visited the Soviet Union for ministry. He became a Christian while a sound engineer with the heavy metal group AC-DC. Taylor is also a board member of ASSIST.

To receive a Soviet pen pal, write: ASSIST Canada, P.O. Box 483, Woodstock, ON N4S 7Y5 or ASSIST USA, P.O. Box 2126, Garden Grove, CA 92642-2126.

Calendar of Events

Jan. 16	RCBPO evening meeting at the Country Squire, QEW and Dorval/Kerr, Oakville, Ont. Speaker: Rev. Andrew Kuyvenhoven. Call (416) 524-1203.	Jan. 27	City-wide hymn-sing, 8 p.m., First CRC, Sarnia, Ont. Special music by "The Harvesters Quartet."
Jan. 17	CFPO Provincial Board meeting, Hillcrest United Church (Trafalgar Rd.), Hornby, Ont. For info, call (519) 837-1620.	Feb. 1-3	"Serving Christ in the Nineties II," a three-day conference for Ontario's Reformed Christian community. At Bolton Conference Centre, Bolton, Ont. Keynote speaker: Dr. Richard Mouw. For info, call (416) 825-3578.
Jan. 19	Annual reunion of the "Dutch Marine Veterans," 5 p.m., St. John's Hall, 2185 Stavebank Rd., Mississauga, Ont. For info, call (416) 277-0501.	Feb. 22	Inauguration of the Pascal Centre, 8 p.m., at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont. Speaker: Dr. A. Plantinga (Notre Dame) on: "When Faith and Reason Clash ...." Free admission. Student art exhibition, Redeemer College Art Gallery, Ancaster, Ont.
Jan. 19	40th Anniversary First CRC, Kingston, Ont. At 7:30 p.m., Kingston Christian School, 1212 Woodbine Rd., Kingston, Ont. Special service at 10 a.m. on Sunday. For info, call (613) 376-3506.	Feb. 24	"Working on the Fringe," an art exhibition by five Canadian artists, 8 p.m., Redeemer College Art Gallery, Ancaster, Ont.
		Feb. 28	



Attention: All C.C. Subscribers and Advertisers

New rates effective Jan. 1, 1991 (Impact of GST)

The Goods and Services Tax has become law. The new rates shown below, effective Jan. 1, 1991, reflect both the impact of the 7% GST as well as an adjustment for inflation and cost increases.

SUBSCRIBERS: New rates effective Jan. 1, 1991:		
	Canadian Subscribers (7% GST is included)	U.S. Subscribers (GST free)
6 months	\$21.25 Cdn.	\$18.00 U.S.
1 year	\$37.50 Cdn.	\$32.00 U.S.
2 years	\$70.00 Cdn.	\$60.00 U.S.
3 years	\$105.00 Cdn.	\$90.00 U.S.

Overseas rates:	
Airmail	\$125.00
Surface	\$70.00

ADVERTISERS: New rates effective Jan. 1, 1991:  
Classifieds: Special occasions (up to six column inches)

	Price includes 7% GST
Births	\$35.00
Marriages/Engagements	\$40.00
Anniversaries (1 column)	\$45.00
Anniversaries (2 columns)	\$90.00
Obituaries	\$45.00
Notes of thanks	\$35.00
Birthday wishes	\$35.00
Charge for extra length (over 6")	\$13.50 per column inch

Classifieds: General information:	
	Price includes 7% GST
Classifieds other than above	\$13.50 per column inch
Photo added	\$25.00 extra
Letter under file (box) number	\$35.00 extra
Minimum fee	\$25.00

Display Advertising	
Basic per column inch rate	\$12.50 p.c.i. plus 7% GST
Per agate line rate	\$ 0.89 p.a.i. plus 7% GST
NOTE: Except for GST, these rates have not been increased.	

Stan de Jong  
Manager

Church news

Christian Reformed Church

Calls accepted  
— to Maranatha, Calgary,  
Rev. Richard Wynia of  
Aylmer, Ont.

Change in worship time  
The Ottewell CRC,  
Edmonton, has changed the  
time of its evening worship  
service to 6:30 p.m. (from 7  
p.m.), effective immediately.

Reformed Church in America

Address change  
Dr. Daniel J. Meeter, 606  
Garden St., Hoboken, New  
Jersey 07030. (Formerly  
Wainfleet, Ont.)

Dolphins are still dying

Each night more than 1,000 ships from Japan, Taiwan and South Korea unfurl up to 30,000 miles of drift nets. The intended catch is tuna or squid, but the nets also snare 800,000 seabirds and up to 120,000 dolphins, whales and seals each year. The U.N. has voted to ban drift nets by 1992 but several nations may not comply.  
Information documented by Greenpeace (Vol. 15, no. 6, Nov./Dec. 1990).

Weekly Puzzle

by C.F. Murray

ACROSS  
1 FDR's mother  
5 Scoop  
9 Thickening agent  
13 Gait  
14 Northern islander  
16 "Damn Yankees" girl  
17 Bridge from Detroit to Canada  
19 Cabal  
20 Deli bread  
21 VIP car  
22 Stage lines  
24 Mex. sandwich  
25 Sawyer of TV  
26 Berlin hit  
29 Digest  
32 Crocodile —  
33 "...pussycat went —"  
34 School of whales  
35 Ultimate  
36 Rescued  
37 "The — Love"  
38 Inglenook remains  
39 Bundled cotton  
40 Alma —  
41 Incentive  
43 Dead ducks  
44 Ephron and Bayes  
45 Parish priest  
46 Resnick of opera  
48 Song for 46A  
49 Clumsy hand  
52 Entr' —  
53 Bridge at Coos Bay, OR  
56 Discharged  
57 Leather type  
58 Farm unit  
59 Small horse  
60 — bien  
61 Great act

4 One — time  
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11 Lily plant  
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18 Murders  
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49 Deep red  
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51 Sharpen  
54 Director's direction  
55 Clumsy one

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APTE GLOMAID  
GRACE LAND ALENE  
MOCHA DEEP ARAB  
ELMER QNTD MINA  
NEEDS BEST DEER



## Books

Robert VanderVennen, book review editor

### Christian ministry

## The deacons' ministry of mercy

### DIAKONIA in the Classical Reformed Tradition and TODAY

Elsie Anne McKee

*Diakonia in the Classical Reformed Tradition and Today*, by Elsie Anne McKee. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990. ISBN 0-8028-0352-0. Softcover, 160 pp., \$16.85.

*Diakonia: Mutual Helping with Justice and Compassion*, by Jaap van Klinken. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990. ISBN 0-8028-0470-5. Softcover, 144 pp., \$19.45. Reviewed by Ray Elgersma, director of Christian Reformed World Relief Canada, Burlington, Ont.

The focus of both of these books is on the diaconal work of the church. Both deal comprehensively with the servanthood ministry that must be a part of a church that loves the Lord Jesus.

Elsie Anne McKee presents an historical perspective on the diaconal role of the church. She painstakingly reviews John Calvin's perspective on *diakonia* and the impact that his teachings have had on that aspect of the church's ministry.

Van Klinken dwells on the theoretical, biblical aspects of the role of the deacon. He stresses that the diaconal role must be one of material helping, with justice and compassion. You would serve yourself well to read either or both of these short books. One or both should be required reading for all deacons.

Van Klinken makes the point that the poor stand in Christ's place to be honoured and loved, based on Matthew 26 where Christ says, "You have the poor with you always, but you will not always have me." Jesus departs; in his place we have the poor. One cannot believe in Jesus and not address the needs of the poor. Van

Klinken then goes on to explain *diakonia* as servanthood, and to show how essential it is that the church fulfil this specialized ministry.

### Strongest in Reformed tradition

Often Reformed Christians come to assume that the office of deacon and its role are a part of every Christian church. It's not so, and McKee, in particular, shows how theology, traditions and social-economic factors have influenced today's churches such that the ministry of *diakonia* is strongest in churches in the Reformed tradition, and that the way Reformed churches interpret the office is unique among churches.

These are some of the points made effectively by both authors: The office of deacon and its work are essential to the well-being of the church. Education of local congregations in equipping the saints to be sensitive to the needs of the poor is important. Diaconal work goes beyond local congregations; the church is called to worldwide service.

Band-Aid approaches aren't enough. We need to address the root causes of poverty. Churches must be concerned about injustice. Our diaconal ministry is not only to Christians. We must minister to all those in need, knowing that it is God's world and all have been created as his image-bearers. Then acknowledging all as image-bearers, we need to carry out our diaconal work with participation of recipients who are regarded as our equals. Attitudes of superiority by the giver have no place in diaconal work.

These books are not practical, step-by-step, diaconal workbooks. All the same, they contain a wealth of information that, if put to practice, will certainly enrich any church's diaconal ministry. McKee ends with an outline of a diaconal training program. Van Klinken talks of diaconal groups in local churches dealing with world issues, racial problems, marriage preparation, single persons, etc.

I am not prepared to recommend one of these books over the other. There is much similarity in their contents. Be sure to read one of them if you are a deacon or are interested in the diaconal ministry of your church.



## Friends of God

Wayne Brouwer

## Horns

"I will cut off the horn of all the wicked, but the horns of the righteous will be lifted up" (Psalm 75:10).

I grew up on a farm, but that doesn't mean I learned how to milk a cow. We were into other kinds of livestock and our "cow" was big and white, and had four tires and only one horn. It was the rural delivery truck for "Quality Check" dairies!

We did see other horns around, though. Every now and again Dad would buy a load of beef cattle that hadn't been dehorned. They'd have to be herded one by one into the squeeze pen where we could hold them motionless while a brave soul with a saw hacked away at their horns. Usually when the horn fell to the ground, a small spray of blood shot out of the beast's head for a few minutes, till it coagulated in a smelly mess down the sides of its face.

What a difference dehorning made in an animal's bearing, though! A steer with horns was a wild and haughty ruler. There was a rage in its eyes and a steamy temperament that could flare in an instant. At least that's how I saw it from my position of frail safety, staring through the cracks in the fence boards.

A dehorned animal, however, could become a friend, a pet, a member of the family. You could reason with an animal without horns. You could hug it and hold it by the neck. And removing the horns from an animal didn't mean that it became weak or cowardly. A better term would be "meek." Someone has said that meekness is power under control, and that's a good picture of the animals I knew.

### Power play

Asaph uses the imagery of horns in Psalm 75 as a way of describing people. "The arrogant," he says blow their own horns (vs. 4). And if that's not enough, they wear their horns in a wicked power play against others (vs. 5). That's why there's so much bloodiness in our world.

Asaph calls on God to dehorn "the wicked" and to balance the scales of justice for the hurting and oppressed. In fact, the act of dehorning the wicked would make music for "the righteous." As the horns of power and evil fall to the ground, those who trust the Lord pick them up and turn them into musical instruments to sound praises to heaven (vs. 10). A bloody horn of depravity is turned into a shining trumpet of grace!

That's what Asaph prays for in Psalm 75. It's the kind of prayer that needs to be raised often in our troubled world. As 1990 closed, Canadian musician Murray McLaughlin talked about that. He hosts a musical variety program on CBC-stereo every Saturday morning. On December 22, he shared with his listeners a song that he wrote at year's end in 1989. He said he wrote it because he was tired of all the news reports that kept telling how evil, corruption and criminal activity seemed so strong. He wrote it because he wanted life to give the little guy the break for once. He wrote it with the hope that whatever powers there might be in the universe to balance the scales of justice, they might lean in the direction of those who love peace and joy and goodness.

### "Let the good guys win!"

This was his wish:

*May I get what I want, not what I deserve.*

*May the coming year not throw a single curve.*

*May I hurt nobody, may I tell no lies.*

*If I can't go on give me the strength to try.*

*Ring the Old Year out! Ring the New Year in!*

*Bring us all good luck; may the good guys win!*

*May the times to come be the best you've had.*

*May peace rule the world; let it make us glad!*

*When you see something wrong, try to make it right:*

*Put a shadowed world into the bright sun light!*

*Ring the Old Year out! Ring the New Year in!*

*Brings us all good luck; may the good guys win!*

Maybe Murray McLaughlin isn't sure to whom he's praying. But there's no doubt in Asaph's mind as to who listens to a song like that. Nor does Asaph question the outcome of life's battles. Just wait to see who blows the last horn!

Wayne Brouwer is a pastor at First Christian Reformed Church in London, Ont.

Jaap van Klinken

## DIAKONIA



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